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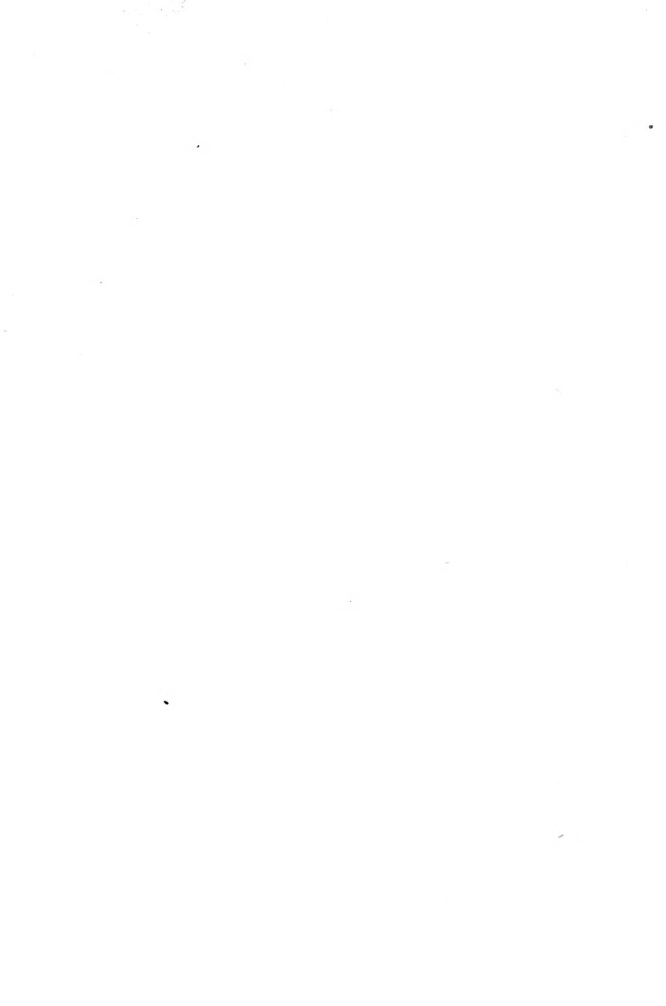
*Es. M. Taylor*

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MEMOIR OF  
ELIZABETH STRIBLING WRIGHT TAYLOR.



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*E. M. Saylor*



# THE STORY OF A LONG LIFE

A MEMOIR OF  
ELIZABETH S. W. TAYLOR  
"AUNT BET"

by  
Hammond



THE MARION PRESS  
JAMAICA, QUEENSBOROUGH, NEW-YORK

1900

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One hundred and fifty copies printed,  
for private circulation.

TO THE ADOPTED CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN,  
AND GREAT-GRANDCHILDREN OF  
“AUNT BET”

THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS AFFECTIONATELY  
DEDICATED.

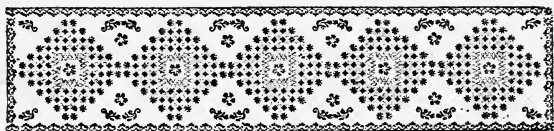
MAY 3D, 1900.  
16 WEST ELEVENTH STREET, NEW YORK CITY.



*ONE hundred years ago on May 3d was born in the old homestead of Milton Valley a baby girl, who was destined in a long and useful life of eighty-three years to influence for good in her day and generation the lives of many, and who so vividly impressed herself upon those under her immediate care that her sayings and doings, filtering down through two successive generations, enrich to-day the character of a third, who, though knowing her not, still owe to that influence an inherited debt of gratitude and love. That the repetition of her name may call up to such a true understanding of her character and life-work, the following sketch has been arranged by one of "the children" who shared her home, her heart, and her loving care.*

*Harriot Milton Hammond.*





## Childhood.

**L**IZABETH STRIBLING WRIGHT MILTON was born May 3d, 1800, at Milton Valley, the home of her parents, John and Anne Stribling Milton, in what is now Clarke (then Frederick) County, Virginia. She made her appearance in an already well-filled nursery, for five brothers and three sisters had preceded her, and the gentle mother seems to have had all she could do in caring for these robust and vivacious children.

The long name of our little heroine was soon abbreviated into "Betsey," and thus was she best known to those with whom she began the pilgrimage of life. Her earliest childhood was passed in the midst of an active, cheerful, and wholesome family life, in a home of ample means, presided over by loving and intelligent parents, and in which were generously exercised the then almost sacred rites of constant hospitality.

She had all of the educational advantages of the time and the locality,—meagre, it is true, judged by the present standard and requirements, but containing a germinating power that bore abundant fruit in the lives of thoughtful, industrious, and loyal men, of pure, intelligent, and conscientious women.

This educational process was carried on in a detached building—called, at various stages of its existence, and at the exigence of the moment, the office, the school-room and the laundry—by a tutor, Mr. McNamara, a gentleman of Irish birth; and upon a class composed of the eight children of the family, a nephew, Eben Milton of Kentucky, and William Meade, the son of a friend and neighbour.

The picture of the mother during this time, as I recall it (received from two of her children), was that of a very gentle and patient semi-invalid, much confined to her bed-room, the all-important centre of a Virginia household; and though sending out from that sanctum a strong influence over the family, she was gradually delegating household cares and responsibilities to the eldest daughter, Harriot, and leaving all important decisions to the strong and practical judgment of her husband. The picture of the husband and father is traced by his children in no vague



or uncertain lines. He is shown a man of strong self-reliance, fine moral character, great industry and enterprise, with a foresight in business affairs usually gathered in broader daily experiences than those falling to the lot of the planter or farmer of the lower Valley of Virginia in the year of Grace 1800.

John Milton of Milton Valley was of mingled English and Scotch descent, of a family who, upon their immigration, finally settled in the neighbourhood of Dumfries, Prince William County, Virginia, in 1737. His father was Richard Milton, his mother Anne Ross of Ross Shire, Scotland; and John was the fourth child in a family of nine. There is no likeness of him that I have ever seen; but his children described him as tall (six feet two inches being his height), large boned and sinewy, with the sandy hair of the Scotsman, and the clear blue eye and florid colour of his English father. His manner was reserved, and his speech slow and deliberate. His signature and handwriting, which I have seen in his account books, etc., were firm, neat, and as clear as copper-plate engraving. I infer his education did not go beyond that attainable in the country school of the time. There is a tradition that the last year of his school-life was passed in the "Academy" at Alexan-

dria, but I do not know that this is so, and am inclined to doubt it. While a very young man he left the tide-water section of Virginia, came over the mountains and settled in what was then called Frederick County (now Clarke). He was married July 20th, 1782, to Anne, daughter of William and Mary Taliaferro Stribling, and very soon after built the homestead of Milton Valley. He was a man of social consideration in his neighbourhood, a mover in all public enterprises, and altogether one of the foremost citizens of the community. He was Justice of the Peace, Vestryman of the Parish in 1785, Commissioner to lay out and name the new County, and Trustee of Battletown, now Berryville, when the village was incorporated and made the county-seat of the new County of Clarke.

Mr. Milton early realized that tobacco, the staple product of the lowlands of Virginia, was not suited to the stronger soil of the valley, and he was among the first to farm, rather than plant, a large estate. His wheat and cornfields stretched on both sides of the road, from his home to the little village that was springing up two miles away. Upon his meadows grazed large herds of cattle and flocks of sheep; among his horses were rare animals that he had im-

ported from England, and his racing stables were well known. All of this prosperity was the result of his own ability, as he had inherited from his parents neither money nor lands. He had, however, received from them the valuable endowment of an excellent home training, a good character, and a fine constitution.

This strength of constitution and power of endurance must have been a gift from the Scotch mother, as I find a proof of her possessing such qualities in this note from the pen of a grandson:

“Our Grandmother was tall, spare, and very neat in dress and appearance. When a very old lady she was still able to ride on her horse from her own home to that of her son in Fayette County, Kentucky, a distance of forty miles.”—Eben Milton, 1st.

As this ancestress of ours, Anne Ross Milton, did not remove from Virginia to Kentucky until after her seventieth year of age, this ride of forty miles must have been taken when she was indeed a “very old lady.”

We left the Milton children in the school-room, where their inherited activity of temperament and love of all the out-of-door work and play of country life got them into many a scrape. They looked upon

the hours spent in the school-room as filched from their more lawful pursuits of riding, hunting, shooting, and fishing, and it is to be feared that none but the two older brothers, Taliaferro and John, and their particular friend William Meade, trod with pleasure and profit the paths in which the Irish scholar led the way.

The little girls, too, loved to romp, ride, and share with their brothers many of the out-of-door sports. "Sister Harriot's" task of keeping in salutary check those riotous young spirits became more and more serious as the gentle mother's strength waned apace. At last the day came when, hushed and awed, the younger children were taken into the presence of their dying mother to receive the parting evidence of her tender love. The moment of leave-taking was solemn and impressive, nor did its influence lightly pass away. After a lapse of sixty years one of that group of weeping children told me of it. The scene was still vivid to her spiritual vision, the chamber still a hallowed spot.

This sad loss came when Betsey was in her tenth year. I have sometimes thought that the realizing of her great loss of a mother's love, at the time when childhood was gliding into young girlhood and so

able to be conscious of the loss, may have been one of the sources of our heroine's great interest in children, left, as she was, motherless; and also of her great success towards filling the mother's place in the lives of such.

"Sister Harriot," who was conceded a most able woman, now formally assumed the care of the household, whenever she could be at Milton Valley, striving to do all that an elder sister could do for the large and (so it seems from tradition) self-willed family of children. It was thought best, however, to give up the home school, and to send the two younger boys, Richard and Ross, over the "Ridge" to an excellent school in Loudoun, kept by Mr. Elzey. The fact that business connected with her own and her infant son's estate called Sister Harriot (Mrs. McIlhaney) often to Loudoun was one reason of the choice of this school.

The two youngest children, Betsey and Florinda, in Sister Harriot's long absences, were nominally supervised by "Sister Nancy," the oldest child at home; but from the freedom of the range and the various anecdotes of fearful lapses in the strict decorum that was called "behaviour" at that time, one can but infer that they were guided by their own

wayward fancies and will, and were consequently frequently in disgrace.

Finally, acting on the advice of his two most intimate friends, Colonel Byrd and Mr. Warner Washington, Mr. Milton set about getting a new mistress for his home and a stepmother for his children. It was not a difficult quest, as both friends ardently recommended the same lady; and after a short wooing the new mistress came in the person of Mrs. Catharine Washington Nelson, a widow with five or six children, two of whom were married. She brought with her to Milton Valley the three youngest children, who ranged in age with the younger Milton children, and thus the family circle was raised to its former numbers.

The story of the home-bringing of the new mother was often told us in our childhood by "Aunt Bet," and always with the same enjoyment of her part in the dramatic performance.

"Sister Harriot" came over from Loudoun to see that all things were in readiness. A general inspection took place of linen-presses, china-closets, pantries, cellars, smoke-houses, poultry yards, in fact of every nook where a Virginia housewife would expect to find treasures but might find moth and dust,—all were

searched and put in perfect order. Preparations were made for the endless series of dining that would ensue. And now all was ready and the family stood expectant, awaiting the crack of the whip, the clatter of the hoofs, that would announce the arrival. Betsey had been noticed as being in a state of excitement unwonted even to her gay temperament. She and Florinda had been dressed early, as they were to be introduced at once, not being considered old enough to sit up to the late supper of welcome. How often have I heard the "Betsey" of that time describe the dress that she and Florinda appeared in on that memorable occasion,—scarlet French merino frocks, aprons of fine Irish linen with broad bands of French linen cambric hemstitched and frilled in ruffs around the neck and armholes.

The master and mistress arrive and are received by the older children, "Sister Harriot" at the head, a handsome young matron. He leads the new mistress into the large dining-room and places her in a chair on one side of the spacious fireplace (it is February, and the logs glow with a hospitable welcome), then, seating himself in his accustomed armchair, just opposite, says, "Where are the children?" The children, standing breathless with excitement at the head

of the "little stairs," just out of view, hear the question and its loving tone, and rush down, a swirling cloud of scarlet merino and white ruffles, fortunately stopping short to make their stiff little "curtsey" or "reverence," are duly kissed, and the gentle little Florinda, the most petted of the family, is lifted to her father's knee. The moment for the grand coup has come, and the irrepressible Betsey (so she ever stands in the family group) says, "Flo has a song to sing you." In indulgent contentment the father says, "Has she? Let her sing it. And, Betsey, you can sing pretty well, too; sing it together." With this permission Florinda slips down from her father's knee, grasps Betsey's outstretched hand, and the little conspirators start on their song. They réel off verse after verse of doggerel, telling the woful estate of the late widower and his consequent quest of a wife with easily recognized local hits. They sang of the misrule at Milton Valley that sent Johnny Milton out in despair as Cœlebs. He rides forth upon his fine steed, attended by his mounted body-servant. Down the road he goes, carefully scanning the horizon for the coming "ladye faire." To him in succession approach all of the eligible ladies of that and the neighboring counties, each presenting her own claims to



the honour of his hand; a catalogue of local hits that made the originals unmistakable. To each of these the stately figure on horseback gives a sympathetic, dignified, but decided negative, and it looks as if he must return to his cheerless home without the "ladye faire." But suddenly there falls upon his ear the distant jingling of worn and rusted harness, the jog-trot of tired and spent steeds, and lo! upon his sight comes a welcome and secretly hoped-for vision, the tumbledown coach, called by the wags the "Snowball," of the Widow Nelson, who is seated in solitary state on the back seat. She makes no enumeration of endowments or charms, simply waves her beautiful hand towards the seat at her side, saying, "I have a Snowball that will carry thee." Upon these words the stately and dignified John throws his bridle to the winds, leaps from his charger, and gladly takes the proffered seat by Kitty, and the couple drive off as fast as the poor worn-out horses can carry them in the direction of the Temple of Hymen. The song is over. The last verses have been sung with an ever increasing haste lest a sentence of present exile and future imprisonment should fall on the daring singers. Betsey was now leading, and the gentle Florinda was bringing out her last notes with a timorous quaver,

when the father, throwing back his head with a burst of hearty laughter showing thorough enjoyment of the skit, looked across the firelit hearthplace with great admiration upon the newly-installed mistress of it, and said, "Not much like that, was it, Catharine?" Catharine sat with a very pretty pink in her cheek and a good deal of spirit in her erect pose, but she simply said, "The verses were very amusing and the children sang them very well. We are keeping them up too late, are we not?"

Thus dismissed the two little girls scampered up the "little stairs" to bed, full of the success of their frolic, sure of sympathy from their attendant, Mammy Maria, and a good deal won over to her side by the amiable way the new mother had taken the rather pronounced practical joke.

The new reign at Milton Valley effected some excellent changes, the greatest of which was the reopening of the school at home. A new teacher was engaged, the "office" once more turned into halls of learning, and the six children duly and daily assembled there at the sign of the birch.

I received the impression from my dear aunt's talks of these old days that none of these children cared for learning for learning's sake, that study hours

were endured but not enjoyed, and that they preferred almost any pastime to that of reading. But, in course of time, there came certain lessons, not taught from books, that were a joy and delight to the four girls, especially so to Betsey, and which they received under most pleasant auspices.

In the old Tavern in Battletown was a long low room, called by courtesy the Assembly Room, in that it was used for all purposes of assemblage, social, political, or military, that called the people of the county together. From this central point, when Betsey was about fourteen years old, was issued a neatly printed circular signed by "M. and Madame Gillou of Philadelphia, late of Santo Domingo," proposing to teach the young ladies and gentlemen of the vicinity all of the latest "Parisian dances, steps, curtseys, bows, and reverences. How to enter and how to leave a salon, etc." The advent of this circular stirred the young people of Milton Valley to the very depths of their juvenile emotions. No rest was given the elders until all the group, Miltons and Nelsons, were entered on the roll of pupils and the lessons begun. Betsey never forgot her great interest in these refined and intelligent instructors, nor her delight in the graceful accomplishment they gave her. In meeting M. and

Madame Gillou she had her introduction to the Old World grace of mien and conversation; her first contact with actors in a dramatic reality far surpassing any fiction known to her young mind, and her first intimate intercourse with any one who might justly claim to have been a victim of cruelty and dire misfortune. Here was certainly food enough for a hungry youthful heart and imagination. And Betsey devoured it all. Between her dancing lessons she learned that her teachers, children of French planters in Hayti, had been born to great wealth and reared in provincial luxury; betrothed in childhood; saved alone of each family the night of the fearful massacre by the faithful love of their negro nurses; smuggled on different ships out of the harbor, and landed in Philadelphia friendless and penniless.

She learned, also, how, led by Providence, as they wandered disconsolately upon the wharves, they met. And then, determining that Fate should not again separate them, these two children married. The great question of subsistence was met by the employing of their united accomplishments. So, by teaching music and dancing in Philadelphia in the winter, and going on the road with these same wares in the summer, they had kept the wolf from the door; were giving to

the world a rapidly increasing number of bright, intelligent, and interesting children, and were, above all, sharing the gay, happy, refining influence of their temperament and accomplishments upon all with whom they came in contact.

The Gillou family lingered some time amid their pleasant and hospitable surroundings in Clarke. Betsey became far and away their most promising pupil. Their eldest child, Victor, a lad of twelve and already a beautiful dancer, was usually given to her for a partner, and together they practised the valse, the gavotte, but, best of all, the graceful "sarabande," which the boy and girl danced slowly up and down the dark-panelled and low-ceiled room, weaving and unweaving between them the folds of a soft silken scarf or "bande."

This dance, the sarabande, was a poem. Its name stirred the imagination like the strains of "*Partant pour la Syrie*,"—its history a rainbow-tinted arc spanning the whole Napoleonic drama, with its starting in the saracenic splendor of Egypt; its zenith the assumption of the imperial crown and purple by the successful soldier of fortune; its vanishing point the tragedy that very hour enacting in Paris. For while these children thrilled to the eloquent story of the

conquests made by the invincible arbiter of European destinies, he in reality sat alone amid the crumbling ruins of his mighty and far-reaching schemes,—a defeated general, a dethroned monarch, awaiting the verdict of his conquerors. The allied sovereigns were in possession of Paris.

It is easy to see that many lessons could be learned and much recreation could be found in the society of Monsieur and Madame Gillou; and when the time came for these able teachers to leave the kind friends and the comfortable old Tavern and wend their way to the city, it was decided that Betsey and Betsey Cary had so profited by the lessons that they were now eligible for boarding-school.

Winchester was the business and social centre of the three counties, Frederick, Berkeley, and Jefferson, and it had lately also become an educational centre, from the excellent school for “young ladies” established there by the Rev. William Hill of Presbyterian fame. To this school the two step-sisters, Betsey Milton and Betsey Cary Nelson, were sent for the finishing touches to their education. There they found among the pupils some relatives and old friends, and among the strangers made some new and lasting friendships. Of these school-friends I

have heard most of four, who seemed to be best remembered, and whose subsequent lives were followed with great interest by Betsey. They were Betty Warner Washington, Mary Byrd Willis, Mary Magill, and Sally Worthington. With "Betty Warner," the most gifted of all, she had frequent opportunities of meeting, and some of these little incidents of Betsey's school life were gathered from conversations between them, when both in very mature age had returned to their native county to live, after having spent many years in other, if not distant, scenes. Mary Byrd Willis had a life of stirring and romantic incident. She married very early and was widowed early; she then married Achille Murat, the son of Napoleon's *beau sabreu* and Caroline Bonaparte, and lived with him on a Florida plantation, in the semi-exile imposed upon the members of the Bonaparte family. Upon the installation of the Prince-President in 1851, Madame Murat, then a widow, was invited to the family council in Paris and was recognized as one of the most interesting of the assembled family. She made a second visit to France upon an imperial invitation, and received, as evidence of being within the limit of the purple, much social consideration and a small pension. The last years of her life were passed

in Tallahassee, where she devoted her means and time to works of benevolence among her former slaves and in efforts to wisely educate and advance them. Betsey and Mary Byrd Willis never met after Mary's marriage to Murat, but she always followed with great interest the varying and interesting circumstances that marked her school friend's life. With Mary Magill the friendship continued beyond girlhood,—the circumstance of their lives being passed largely in Virginia enabled them to meet at intervals. Mary Magill married Mr. Randolph, and lived a long and beautiful life in her country home in Fauquier County, Virginia. The present Bishop of Southern Virginia, Rt. Rev. Alfred M. Randolph, is one of her sons.

Dr. Hill lived on Market Street, in the house now numbered "132," and the school-rooms were in the small building adjoining. Col. Archy Magill, Mary's father, lived in the same street, in the house owned by the late Governor Halliday. Our Aunt always spoke of the gardens of these houses as then joining. A large cherry-tree shaded the dividing fence at one point, and by its low branches Betsey often swung herself over the intervening barrier and spent many sweet moments in forbidden and therefore highly to



be prized recreation in the old-fashioned box-hedged garden with her friend Mary. Betsey seems to have been the leader in all the escapades planned and carried out in the little attic bedrooms of these fun-loving school-girls. She was, from her agility, especially available for sentinel duty, and whenever, upon the infrequent absences of Dr. Hill, or the reception of a box of eatables from home, or some such good fortune, a great spread was announced, Betsey would scramble up the ladder, push through the trap-door, and seat herself upon the ridge or comb of the roof between the large chimneys, thus commanding a view of all roads leading to the house and prepared to give early warning of the Doctor's return. This was always a moment of great triumph to her; none of the others "dared" to do it. From this height, looking down on the town, she waved graceful salutations to her friends who might recognize her from the street, and fully established her reputation of being a girl who would dare anything for a frolic.

This was indeed delightful and seemed to bear, for a time, a charm against failure. The pitcher, however, may go too often to the fountain! One day, upon an occasion of unusual hilarity, and after partaking of the spread and the fun with her compan-

ions, Betsey mounted to her watch-tower. The sounds of merriment were borne to her ear for some little time, then suddenly quiet prevailed and a silence that might be felt impressed Betsey ominously. She felt she had better descend, and quickly. Turning her back, she began cautiously to step down, but hardly had she reached the third or fourth round of the ladder when her white stockinged ankles were grasped by strong hands and the incensed voice of Dr. Hill condemned her to swift and sure punishment.

One more little incident of schooldays will show the frank if somewhat saucy way Betsey had of meeting all situations. In the evening the older pupils would be gathered around a "candlestand," studying the lessons for the next day's recitations, in the same room with Dr. Hill at his table preparing a sermon, or thesis, etc. At such times, while deep in thought, he liked to have a small comb that he carried in his pocket passed gently through his long hair, and would frequently call on one of his daughters for the service. This evening we speak of, looking around the group he caught Betsey's roving eye and said with a friendly beckoning finger, "Come, Cousin, and comb my hair." She kept her seat and answered,

“ I will come on your promise to call me Cousin in the grammar class to-morrow.” The grammar class and the parsing in “Paradise Lost” seemed her one painful reminiscence of the days under good Dr. Hill’s care. She retained her regard for him and her intimacy with the members of his family as long as the circumstances of their lives made intercourse practicable.

When Betsey was fifteen and a half years old,—Betsey Cary being a year older,—school-life was brought to an end by the introduction of the two into society at the Race Ball in Winchester, the great social event of the neighbourhood. Her father’s custom had been to set aside the proceeds from one field for pin-money for his daughters, which might be spent in extra gauds and finery or in any way they pleased. Betsey, in anticipation of the ball, had already decided in what her portion should be spent. When, therefore, her stepmother drove up to “town,” Winchester, and took the two girls from their classroom to Mr. John Bell’s store, then as now at the corner of Loudoun and Water Streets, to make their selections, Betsey lost no time in choosing a sheer white mull for a gown, and yards and yards of rose-coloured sarcenet and ribbons to match it. The sarce-

net was to be made into a long scarf, to be worn knotted on the right shoulder, passing diagonally to the right hip, there again knotted, and thence falling to the hem of her gown. I have no doubt that Madame Gillou's word-pictures of Josephine and her Court had in some vague way suggested this half-classical dress; and Betsey had evolved it as best she might from her meagre opportunities. At last the hour came for the dressing to begin, and then it was explained that Betsey Cary, being the oldest, was to wear the flowing scarf of "rose-coloured sarcenet," and for Betsey there had been made a pelerine of sarcenet, bound with narrow satin ribbon, as more suitable to her tender years! It was a great disappointment, but Fate has its recompenses, and there may be more exquisite pleasures than wearing Diana-like draperies; for did not Warner Throckmorton engage Betsey for the principal dances, and did they not float dreamily through the graceful figures of the sarabande, make their best curtseys and bows in the gavotte, and finally, nearer dawn than midnight, whirl through the Virginia reel? After this merry ending Betsey and her pelerine retired, bearing with her the laurels of the Belle of the Ball.

After this occasion a return to the school-room

was not to be thought of, and the step-sisters went home to Milton Valley to the usual course of life at that time in prosperous country neighbourhoods,—of merrymakings at one popular country-house or another, of dinings-out on week days, and the whole neighbourhood's assembling at the "Stone Chapel" on Sunday for service; but, above all, of much gathering together of the most informal kind of all the young people in the same family connection; sometimes at one homestead, sometimes at another. In that time and locality kinship meant much. Betsey was often at the home of her maternal uncle, Francis Stribling, in Frederick County, not far from Winchester. She was a great favourite with him and with his children, and with them she formed very close ties of friendship and affection.

Another favourite place of sojourning with her was the home of her sister Harriot, who was now, by a second marriage, Mrs. William Taylor, living in Clarke County, six or eight miles from Milton Valley. It was during these visits to Sister Harriot that Betsey learned to know and become attached to Bushrod Taylor, a younger brother of her brother-in-law William, who, recently coming from Kentucky, had determined to remain in Virginia and settle down in the

neighbourhood of his older brother and his uncles Griffin, Eben, and Bushrod Taylor, all three of whom were owners of large landed estates in this part of the valley.

This handsome, energetic, autocratic young Bushrod Taylor won Betsey's heart. In her very short experience as a "grown-up lady" she had had several offers of marriage, her suitors including men from other states and neighbourhoods, a fact so well known as to provoke the local wit to say that "before she was sixteen Betsey Milton had been invited to enter five different states, including the state of matrimony." She was so young and so content with the pleasures of girlhood that the news of her engagement to young Bushrod Taylor caused much surprise, especially in the home circle of Milton Valley, where the surprise was tinged with a want of perfect approbation. However, Sister Harriot's influence smoothed away all difficulties, and Elizabeth Stribling Wright Milton, known as "Betsey" in these pages, was married at Milton Valley to Bushrod Taylor, by Rev. Alexander Balmain, November 13th, 1817.

Before taking leave of the girlhood of our heroine a picture of her as I received it from Miss Betty Warner Washington is here given: "When she en-

tered the school, by her splendid vitality, Betsey made a strong and lasting impression. She was not beautiful (as Betsey Cary was), but tall, strong, lithe, and graceful, with a fund of cheerful gayety that nothing could quell or exhaust, and with a store of sympathetic helpfulness that soon made her the leader of all that went on in the school-world—except in study. She added to these active qualities great unselfishness and a quick forgiving of all the petty jealousies that will creep in where many are gathered together, and every one counted on her friendliness.”





## Early Womanhood.

**B**USHROD TAYLOR was the fourth child and third son of John and Sarah McKinnon Taylor, both of whom were natives of Virginia, but at the time of Bushrod's birth were living in Kentucky, where Mr. John Taylor had extensive grants of land. The father seems never to have been long stationary in one home, but to have changed his residence often and whimsically. Fortunately for Bushrod, he was placed when quite a little lad at "The Hill," the homestead of his uncle Thomas Marshall in Mason County, Kentucky, where, treated as a son of the house by his dearly loved Aunt and Uncle Marshall, he lived until his sixteenth year. When about eighteen years of age, at the suggestion of his oldest brother William, Bushrod came to Clarke County, Virginia, and rented from his brother-in-law, Mr. James Ware of River Side, a



small farm lying on the Shenandoah River very near Snicker's Ferry. In connection with this farm was a tannery and a grist mill, and all three of these industries were undertaken by this rosy-cheeked, beardless boy, who was gifted with a burning energy and ambition. Here he worked very untiringly and successfully for three years, kept from loneliness by almost daily visits to his sister, Mrs. Ware, living very near by at River Side.

Upon his engagement to Betsey Milton, Bushrod turned his energy towards transforming a very ordinary tenant's cottage into a suitable home for the young bride. He must have been successful in his attempt, for even in her latest life she would refer with pride to the snug little contrivances and conveniences of this her first home. Here, with no experience save what young eyes had casually seen in the extravagantly managed establishment of Milton Valley, Betsey, nothing daunted by the difference in circumstances and surroundings, took up the duties of her married life. The position of mistress upon a Virginia plantation or farm was no sinecure. It meant the seeing to the proper housing, feeding, clothing, and training of all those dependent beings, the "servants." Beginning even in the modest way that our

young couple started their cottage home, meant a serious undertaking for a young girl just turned sixteen. A cook who was also to have charge of the cows, dairy, and fowls; a maid for chamber, laundry work, etc., and a diminutive house-boy, Joe by name, were Betsey's domestic corps. The last mentioned was the only member of her household on whom her age and experience might make some impression. Joe soon discovered his mistress's fear of snakes, frogs, and all creeping things, and used the discovery to shorten many an hour of toil. She has often told us of how, when rubbing the dining-room table or polishing the floor under her animating inspection had ceased to be a novelty, Joe, so engaged, would stare with an eye apparently transfixed by terror upon a dark corner of the room and exclaim pantingly, "Ef dar ain't a big blacksnake!" knowing perfectly that his young mistress would jerk up her skirts, fly from the room, and remain away, hoping that the snake, tired of loneliness, would also leave, or that St. George, in the person of her young husband, would come to deliver her; while Joe would have made an equally hasty rush from the room, from the house, to the river bank and his fishing-line, whence nothing but a long, loud blast from the kitchen dinner-horn would

recall him to the duties of "butler, under-butler, fly-brush boy," etc.

Betsey had many other besetments of a different character from her women, not from their youth but from their age and experience. They had "been raised at home" on "a big place," where Miss Betsey had been one of the youngest of the children and never "carried the keys." They had always preserved, pickled, cured meats, cooked, etc., by "old mistress's" recipes; were they now to learn new ways, completely setting aside family customs and traditions, and just to please "Miss Betsey"? There were trials of strength as to whose ways were to be followed; but after awhile all found that their young mistress knew what she wanted and how to have it done, and in the end these mutinous critics gave her devoted and competent service.

The young wife did not play at housekeeping long. Nature created her for a helpmeet, and she soon saw that in her own domain and sphere lay many ways and means of perfecting that part. She had never-failing friends to whom she could go for counsel in all emergencies from which her own keen inner consciousness could evolve no solution. These were her own sister Harriot and her husband's sister Harriot,

Mrs. James Ware. These emergencies came so often that, like the "steeds of the Knights in Branksome Towers," her good mare Snowdrop seemed ever to stand in her stall, bridled and saddled, that she might "up and away" to one or the other of the good sisters. I can easily see her now, so well do I know those roads and lanes leading to "Sister Harriot's," and so often have I heard her tell of these scenes. A quick gallop up the bowery bank of the Shenandoah, then a sharp turn at the Ferry, now slowly up a great stretch of green meadows that on the right lose themselves at the horizon in deep, dark woods, and on the left the continuous but ever changing graceful line of blue mountains as they follow the windings of the river. Snowdrop knew just where to halt; and Joe, who, like black Care, had all the time been perched up behind his mistress, would now leap down, open the "big gate," and then trot along beside her horse until the house would be reached. Once arrived, a cabinet council would be called, strained relations between mistress and maid would be looked into, questions of domestic economy weighed and sifted. Problems not exactly abstract would be earnestly studied. "Why," for instance, "when there were so many cows, was there so little cream and but-

ter?" or "When the hens were so well housed and fed, why were there so few eggs in the nests?" How many hanks of yarn must be allowed for a pair of stockings? how much less for socks? How many pounds of wool must be allowed for a yard of cloth or domestic flannel at the neighbouring Fulling Mills? When would the village tailor come to her to cut out the people's clothes? And could sister Harriot give her the Milton Valley recipe for curing hams? and wasn't it the best in the world? Sandwiched between these more important questions, engagements were made for family gatherings and neighbourhood visitings; social etiquette was debated; newly received patterns for gowns, bonnets, and caps were exchanged, and all the time much loving sisterly talk and advice went on.

On March 17th, 1818, Betsey lost her father; he died at Milton Valley, "beloved and respected by all who knew him," so says the *Winchester Gazette* of that date. His children were very devoted to him, and their sorrow was great at his death. A change at Milton Valley was now necessitated by the decision of the widow, Mrs. Milton, to leave there and go to the White Post neighbourhood to live, that she might be near to her married daughters, Mrs. Meade and

Mrs. Washington. Milton Valley became then, partly by inheritance and partly by purchase, the property of Captain William Taylor, and "Sister Harriot" returned to her birthplace and girlhood home, and the old house once more resounded with the glad and happy voices of a growing young family. This removal of the William Taylor family placed a greater distance between the homes of the two sisters, and Betsey turned oftener than ever to the dear sister-in-law at hand. The most affectionate friendship and trust grew up between them, and when, in a few years' time, Mrs. Ware died in the very prime of a young and valuable life, it was found that she had left an expression of her wish that her children should be placed in the care of the young sister-in-law. Betsey did not hesitate to accept this great responsibility, and it came to her hand in hand with great expected enjoyment. The lack in her life was the presence of children in her home; and now this was to be filled, pressed down and overflowing, but not too many for her heart—it was large enough to hold all. Her husband, their Uncle Bushrod, was the guardian, and she Aunt Betsey by title, but mother ex-officio to these four orphan children, James, Marshall, Catherine, and Mary Ware. They were all frail in health,

but little Mary extremely so, and thus she came in for a double amount of care and petting, sleeping in a little bed beside Aunt Betsey's own high-poster.

The children were too young and too delicate in constitution to be sent away to school; so, following the well established precedent, an outside building was fitted out for a school-room, the children of several neighbouring families invited to join the school, and a teacher of some reputation was secured in the person of a young Scotch clergyman, a Mr. Cleod by name. Mr. Cleod must have been a man of strong personality. He left on his pupils an almost ineffaceable impress, and I doubt if he has ever been equalled in that community as a drillmaster. He was able to kindle an ambition for a high standing in scholarship and an enthusiastic wish for his own personal commendation. Drill and discipline, reward and punishment, were the tools with which he wrought, producing havoc almost as often as good. A great superiority in open-air sports gave him a strong following out of school hours among the boys; but with the little girls it was very different. The long "tasks" in grammar, dictionary, arithmetic, and composition being over for the day, this little band would slowly and sadly wend their way homeward, generally carry-

ing tucked away in their pockets or bags little three-cornered notes, clearly written, running this way, "Mary must remember to go to bed to-night without supper," for trifling in class, or not knowing her mental arithmetic, etc., ad infinitum. This went on until almost every childish pleasure or favourite indulgence was put away, and the joyousness of childhood seemed fast fleeting before the burden imposed upon these conscientious children. This change did not escape Aunt Bet's watchful eye, and one day when, on steadfastly declining her favourite pudding at dinner, little Mary burst into tears, Aunt Betsey threw down the gauntlet and dared the dour young Scotsman to meet her in debate.

He must have been worsted, although she was always an unboastful opponent, as he made a complaint to the "conscript fathers" that "through Mrs. Bushrod Taylor's unwise indulgence of the children the discipline of the school would be broken up." A compromise resulted: little Mary was withdrawn from the school, and milder discipline was to be meted out to the remaining girls; but the boys (so they always declared) were to receive double birchings. The fathers had received their education and school



training at the end of the rod, and the result was manifestly good; why should the sons be deprived of their just rights and privileges? So reasoned these conservative fathers.

Aunt Betsey now added to the many and varied duties of the mistress of a well administered household that of teaching Mary, and we, the initiated, can well imagine the gentleness of the discipline, the general cheerful indulgence that pervaded the short hour of study, and the frequency of the long hour of recreation; cuddling the young ducks and chickens, gathering roses for the linen-presses and sage and thyme leaves to be dried for savoury sauces, seem to have been among Mary's object lessons and severest tasks. Even these began soon to pall upon the frail child. One summer day, in bringing in her copy-book for inspection, she having been permitted to "set her own copy," Aunt Betsey found that instead of placing at the head of the page some favorite aphorism from "Poor Richard's Almanack" the little maid had written and then faithfully copied line upon line an axiom gathered from her own brief experience, "Picking Sage is very teegus."

With all the tender care bestowed upon her Mary

did not live beyond very early girlhood, and her vacant chair at the fireside marked the first loss in the flock that Aunt Betsey had tended and mothered.

An epidemic of typhoid fever had passed through the whole countryside in 1824-25 and among other families stricken by it was that of Milton Valley. The wife and mother known in this sketch as "Sister Harriot," and her infant child, a son, died from an attack of this dreaded scourge, and the home was left desolate indeed. Milton McIlhaney, the son of "Sister Harriot's" first marriage, went to the guardianship of a paternal uncle in Loudoun County, and the two daughters, Sarah and Florinda Taylor, aged respectively seven and four years, were received of course into Aunt Betsey's maternal heart and arms. These two children occupied a peculiarly near place to the uncle and aunt to whom they were now sent, being nieces on their father's side to Bushrod Taylor, and nieces on their mother's side to his wife. They remained with them at this time a year and a half, and then, their father having married a second wife, Miss Hannah McCormick, they were taken home to Milton Valley. From this time they seem to have had two very happy homes, going from one to the other with equal freedom whenever the exigencies of school

life or superior social attractions made the one or the other, for the time being, the most desirable.

Bushrod Taylor, 2d, (our uncle Bushrod,) was a man of energy and ability. He soon outgrew the interests that had guided him in the choice of his first home in Clarke. The deaths of his sister and her husband severed his one strong tie to the River neighbourhood, and soon after this he determined to remove nearer to Berryville, the county seat, that he might secure better schools for his young wards and be within the radius of the homes of his own and his wife's kindred. Three of his father's brothers owned large and beautiful estates in that part of the county. Griffin Taylor lived at Clifton, which is still owned and occupied by his descendants; Bushrod at Morgan Spring, called by its present owners "Rest-Easy," and Eben at what is now known as "The Middle Farm."

Adjoining Milton Valley was a place called "Aldridge," well situated and fertile, but from neglect in an impoverished condition. Bushrod Taylor bought this estate and at once removed his family to it. He began fencing, draining, planting, etc., with a tireless energy that soon brought the place into beautiful and productive order, and at the expiration of three years it took the prize given by the Agricultural Society for

the best tilled farm in the lower Valley of Virginia. About this time Mr. Taylor added to his farming interests the importing and raising of horses and cattle, taking many prizes for fine specimens of both. "All of us" must remember some of those prizes. The six massive silver cups, perfectly plain but for the legend "Agriculture," that always prominently stood on the sideboard of Aunt Bet's home, wherever that might be, were among the testimonials to the superiority of the Aldridge farm and stock. These were much dearer to her than the prizes she won in her own domain of poultry-yard and dairy. Aunt Betsey was always more than content to let others carry off the prizes that her own ability and judgment had largely helped to secure. Her life was very full at this time, and every change in the life and circumstances of the clan brought to her personally additional responsibilities. From these she plucked her golden opportunities.

It was during their residence at Aldridge that Mr. John Taylor, the father of Captain William and Bushrod Taylor, in very broken health and fortunes, came back to his native state, Virginia, to live, and decided to make his home with Bushrod, his younger son. The office, that ever present adjunct to the "house,"

was made into a suitable and comfortable dwelling-place, and there, attended by his body-servant, Fairfax, he lived for years a life free of all responsibility, tenderly cared for by his sons and their wives. Every morning after her accustomed visit to the store-room, smoke-house, dairy, poultry-yard, garden, spinning-room, sewing-room, and all the other rooms that hummed with the busy life at Aldridge, Aunt Betsey would take her knitting and walk "across the yard" to cheer the old gentleman with humorous accounts of the doings on the place and the gossip of the neighbourhood. Often, if he so wished it, she would take Fairfax's place in the "gig" and drive him about the sweet-smelling lanes and shady woodlands, or take him for short calls at Milton Valley, or shopping excursions into the village, where he filled his coat pockets with nuts and raisins, to be kept at hand for his visiting grandchildren. He became very devoted to her, and it is through her kindly picture of him in those days of his decline that we, his descendants, know him most favourably.

I love to think upon Aunt Betsey at this time of her full and maturing life. She stands in my picture midway of the foreground stretching out both hands to her work,—with one healing the wounds made by

a stormy past while she gently leads a disappointed and worn man to more peaceful thoughts as his sun nears its setting; with the other dropping "like the gentle dew from heaven" the blessings of loving care and cheerful, inspiring hope on the dawning hours of youth into which the childhood of her little band is fast merging.





## Maturity.

**I**N 1830 Uncle Bushrod purchased the old hotel on Loudoun Street, Winchester, Virginia, from the executors of Mr. Edward McGuire. Thinking that he would continue to live at Aldridge and have the hotel kept by some one competent in that line, he did not at first remove his family, but would ride or drive the dozen miles every few days to assure himself that the work was being done as he would have it. He tolerated nothing but implicit obedience and most thorough work; he spared neither his own time, strength, or means. Therefore, in every enterprise that he took up, vigilant supervision, earnest co-operation, hard work, and generous financial results were to be expected; and his community began to rely upon his intelligent and progressive energy in public matters as well as in his own private ventures.

In this purchase Uncle Bushrod took the first step in the development of a project that he had long been turning over in his mind, and that was the making of a turnpike or McAdam road through the Valley of Virginia from the crossing of the Shenandoah River at Snicker's, now Castleman's, Ferry, through Winchester, thence on to Staunton, and thence through the length of the upper valley to the headwaters of the James River; practically suggesting the same route that, half a century later, the builders of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad and its many branches have availed themselves of,—the ultimate hope and aim being that one of the great lines of traffic between the seaboard at Baltimore and the fertile Mississippi Valley, with its exhaustless resources, should pass through the Valley of Virginia.

Up to 1825 Virginia had been the most populous state in the Union, but the opening of the Erie Canal, connecting the Hudson River with the Great Lakes, made Central New York a highway for the movement of population westward. Large cities grew up there, capital was attracted, and manufacturing began on a large scale; the result was that the population soon went beyond that of any other state.

Uncle Bushrod craved a similar prosperity for his



own state, and thought it entirely attainable. Already, in his eager imagination, he saw trains of white-covered wagons carrying hardy emigrants through and onward to the forests and mines of the Piedmont Country, or heard the sweet, tinkling music of the "bell-teams," the loud and jocund laughter of the trusted negro teamsters, as in large companies they convoyed their precious freight of grain and flour to the fast clipper ship lying in the Baltimore harbour waiting to carry it out to the markets of the distant world. The needed factor to secure this blessing of increased prosperity that he saw so clearly with the mind's eye was a road, and he decided to work for that end.

So forming his plans and dreaming his dreams of "busy and confident to-morrows," Uncle Bushrod suddenly determined to break up the home at Aldridge and remove to the hotel in Winchester. It was at once done with his wonted energy and success. He promised "Betsey" (thus he always called her) that she would not be called upon to change her manner of living; the "children," now almost grown nephews and nieces, would still be around her, only her sphere and means of doing for them would be enlarged.

Rooms connected by a corridor or gallery with the main building of the hotel were set apart for her occupancy, where she could have lived a detached life, as very competent heads had been placed over the various departments of the house and no appeal to her decision was necessary. But her interest and pride in all that her husband did would not let her remain simply a spectator upon this new field of his activity, and she was soon just as busy as at Aldridge.

The two eldest nieces, Catherine Ware and Sarah Ann Taylor (my mother), were now absent at Mrs. Porter's boarding-school in Alexandria, Virginia; and Aunt Betsey's motherly solicitude was expending itself in watching over the waning health of the two nephews, James and Marshall Ware, who, as they grew to manhood, seemed to be developing symptoms of the disease that had been fatal to their parents, pulmonary consumption. The second year after the removal to Winchester, and almost immediately upon his return from wintering in Florida, James, the older brother, died.

The physicians who were consulted thought that an entire change of scene and life, as well as climate, might prolong the life of Marshall, and Aunt Betsey determined to seek them for him. With this object

in view she started upon the first long journey of her life, and in a gig; she driving Marshall and followed by a "body-servant" (as a valet was then in that region called) carrying the necessary portmanteaux, saddle-bags, etc. Marshall closed his law-books to which he was so devoted a student; she delegated her many duties to skilful assistants; they mounted the gig, and one beautiful morning in the early spring they set out from Winchester, taking the old North-western road, crossing the Potomac at Shepherdstown, then through upper Maryland to Cumberland, and on to the Ohio, by the same roads and paths that Braddock had marched to his fatal campaign and defeat. At some point on the Ohio they took a boat, going in that pleasant way some distance down the beautiful stream, but the greater part of the journey was by driving. Thus travelling slowly, loitering here and there, stopping over at will and pleasure, the travellers finally reached their objective point, Uncle Marshall's home, "The Hill," in Mason County, Kentucky. Here they lingered many weeks among these affectionate and hospitable kinsfolk; and Aunt Betsey soon learned to share her husband's almost filial love to the heads of their clan, Uncle Thomas and Aunt Frances Marshall. They vividly impressed her as

different and superior to mortals usually. They seemed (so I gathered from her talk so many, many years after), even at the time of her visit, to represent to those around them, both in thought and manner, a dignified and historic past.

The visit to "The Hill" ended. The travellers drove through the famed woodland district of Kentucky, visiting Lexington and Louisville, and at Covington crossed to Cincinnati, where they remained several weeks with the family of Uncle Griffin Taylor, the younger brother of Uncle Bushrod and of my grandfather and of Marshall Ware's mother. This was a delightful episode in the long journey, and reluctantly they brought the visit to a close, parting with regret from the three gay and sweet young girl cousins as well as from the affectionate elders of the family.

Up to this time Marshall had apparently reaped the expected benefit from the open-air life he had been leading combined with a constant change of interest and scene, and therefore, her cheerful nature all aglow with hope, Aunt Bet turned her horse's head to the east and began the long drive home.

The first day's stage was scarcely over before signs of the old fever, cough, and feebleness, one by one,

stealthily appeared in the condition of the invalid; and from that hour on the homeward drive seemed a race with death.

Even under the strain resulting from such sad circumstances Aunt Betsey was able to retain her cheerful hopefulness, inspiring the dying youth with the fixed idea that he would see his home and family again. As they neared the end of the journey Marshall expressed the wish to go to Clarke, not to Winchester. A fleet messenger was sent on in advance, and at Milton Valley the family gathered to welcome the travellers, one of whom was so weary and spent with the burden of his day, and that day still so young! He was fast reaching the hour when "we lay our burdens down," and with those he loved best around him, and in the spot where he wished to be, God took him to the higher and better life.

To lose the daily care and companionship of Marshall from her life was indeed a loss to Aunt Betsey, for the tie between them was nearly akin to that between mother and son. I cannot help thinking that the young men in the family connection who came after suffered by comparison with the many charms of character, mind, and person that made this beloved youth a beautiful and fadeless memory to her; and

when, even up to my day, Aunt Bet would remark of some one of the young relatives, "He reminds me of Marshall Ware," we realized that the new candidate stood high in her favour.

It was a sad home-coming without him; but it was not Aunt Betsey's way to repine in times of loss or sorrow, but rather to turn courageously to what was left her, and to throw even greater earnestness and self-devotion into the duties and work just at hand. So it was at this time. She was very much needed at home.

In her long absence from Winchester Uncle Bushrod had been busy forming plans for pushing the construction of the road he had so set his heart upon making through the Valley. To do this necessitated many and long absences from home. He met with many disappointments, but he did not allow them to long discourage him. When the National Government would not favour his scheme he turned hopefully to the power of the State of Virginia.

In the rapid growth and expansion of our country the question of "Internal Improvements" had sprung into such importance as to constitute a political issue in the campaigns of 1825 and 1830, and had brought about a new division of parties. The Democrats de-

nied any constitutional authority to the Government to build roads, canals, etc. The State's Rights Whigs likewise denied to the National Government the authority to build such works, but conceded it to the State. Uncle Bushrod had been a steady Whig from the formation of the party; so, pocketing his documents, credentials, etc., and accompanied by his valet, "Billy Button," he posted down to Richmond to urge his project by special legislation.

There he found no "lobbying" could make a breach in the wall of Democratic opposition to the use of State aid for internal improvements, and he could obtain no concession beyond a charter permitting the road to be made by private enterprise, were that possible. Having secured this much, Uncle Bushrod then proceeded to engage engineers, contractors, labourers, etc., and in a short time the work was well under way.

The engineering department was committed to two very young men. One of them, Joseph Anderson, just graduated from the Military Academy at West Point, became later the founder of the celebrated Tredegar Iron Works at Richmond, Virginia, and still later was known to us as the gallant General Anderson of the Confederate Army. The other was William Taylor,

later president of the Bank of the Valley in Staunton, Virginia. A more fortunate selection could not have been made. Possessing ability, training, character, and ambition, these young men seized their opportunity, and so well improved it that their work stands to this day a road of unrivalled excellence. A great highway for trade and travel, it winds a silver thread through the heart of the famous valley, enriching towns and villages, skirting forests, climbing steep hillsides, running side by side with rapid brooks, crossing the swift flowing Shenandoah again and again, yet always to find the "Daughter of the Stars" still waiting in advance—her source not yet reached. As long as these clear waters flash and sparkle in the sunshine, or the mountains cast their strong, tender twilight shadows over the smiling meadow-lands, this winding way must be a "thing of beauty." As long as the records of history last it must be a thing of pride, for there is scarcely a mile of its length that is not consecrated by the achievements or suffering of the indomitable Army of Northern Virginia, or immortalized by the genius of its heroic leader, Stonewall Jackson.

Greatly absorbed in his work of building two hundred miles of macadamized road by "private enter-



prise," or, in other words, one whose cost of construction was guaranteed by himself, Uncle Bushrod was compelled to leave the administration of home affairs and domestic improvements to Aunt Betsey.

Two grown nieces now lived with her, Catherine Ware and Sarah Ann Taylor (my mother). A third niece, Sarah Cornelia Taylor, the oldest daughter of Uncle Bushrod's older brother, Benjamin Taylor of Baltimore, a young woman of great beauty of character and person, was often and for long periods of time with her. For this trio Aunt Betsey entered into all the social pleasure that Winchester or the county afforded. A great change had come over the spirit of the social life since the Race Ball of twenty-five years before. A scene and occasion such as that was now recalled only "to point a moral, or adorn a tale."

The good old town was sharing the great change that had been wrought everywhere by the more serious and evangelical views that the church was urging upon the world. But Virginia had an added advantage in that she lived under the strong teaching and in the light of the bright example of William Meade, now the Bishop of the Diocese, who more than any one other person had brought the besetting sins of the country population, racing and intemperate drinking,

into disfavour. While abating not one jot or tittle of the church's vocation as the religious teacher, Bishop Meade strove to make it reach out and encompass every human interest. He sought to make it a positive uplifting influence in education, in charitable, in public, and in civic matters; in a word, nothing was too broad, nothing too insignificant, to strike hands with the church and together work for the "glory of God" and the good of man.

He laid out new parishes in waste places; he built little pine-board chapels and school-houses in our mountains in localities that seemed the very strongholds of evil living. He established schools for girls, and endowed a high-school for boys, interesting the well-off people of his diocese in the cause of higher education; but first and last and all the time he placed squarely before masters and mistresses their position of responsibility to their slaves. Bishop Meade's own modest manner of living, his large charities, and his unsparing use of his time and strength in the discharge of the duties of his very toilsome office, were a perpetual lesson and stimulus to all around him; and thus he wrought a great work.

His influence was deeply felt by Aunt Betsey and her nieces; they all enlisted under his banner, and in

their little part of the great field they were faithful soldiers, each taking up the duty and work nearest at hand and doing it in a consecrated spirit. "Young men and maidens" devoted themselves to like objects, working together under the same inspiration, and taking later on into their joint homes new and higher views of life and its noble opportunities.

The winter of 1835 was spent by Uncle Bushrod and his niece Catherine Ware in New Orleans and its neighbourhood, that she might escape the rigour of that season in the Valley of Virginia. The result of the visit was very satisfactory in her much improved health. Soon after their return home she was married to Dr. William McGuire and went to live upon her estate at River Side, the home of her early childhood. This, the first marriage in Aunt Betsey's circle of adopted children, was followed the next winter, 1836, by the marriage of Sarah Ann Taylor, eldest daughter of Captain William Taylor of Milton Valley, to George W. Hammond. This young couple began their married life at "The Happy Retreat," near Charles' Town, Jefferson County, Virginia, now West Virginia. These two marriages made a great change in Aunt Betsey's immediate family circle; they did, however, but expand the radius of her loving interest

and affection, for the newly planted households of her nieces were as offshoots from her own, and as time went on the children born to them looked upon their yearly migration to Aunt Betsey's as a time of indulgence and pleasure usually associated only with a visit to "Grandmama's."

WHEN the completion of "the road" gave Uncle Bushrod a period of comparative leisure his ineradicable love of sowing, planting, and improving asserted itself, and for its better indulgence he bought of the Jacqueline Smiths an old homestead just outside of the corporate limits of Winchester, adjoining the playgrounds of the Academy, and removed there from the hotel. The dwelling-house, well situated on a beautiful slope, was large, rambling and much out of repair, but capable of being made into a most comfortable home. This work, so congenial to him and also to Aunt Betsey, was at once begun, and the house was thoroughly repaired and tastefully restored, decorated, and furnished.

He built new stables and other out-houses, replanted the orchards, laid out new lawns and gardens, replaced the dying poplars in the avenue by a tree, the silver aspen, then new to this region, and intro-

duced, under the supervision of Dr. Togno, a Corsican gentleman, the cultivation by the espalier method of nectarines, apricots, foreign species of plums, and many rare varieties of the vine. The fever of prize-taking seems again to have fastened itself upon Uncle Bushrod; under it he organized, as an adjunct to the county agricultural society, fruit and flower shows, and was soon awarded distinctions for the best specimens of many rare exhibits, especially for the golden egg plum, which I remember as drops of clear amber in looks and (my idea of) the nectar of the gods in taste.

In a very short time under his energetic treatment the old place began to blossom as a rose and to take on the beauty and charm of comfort that "we all" remember distinguished it above all other homes of that period and vicinity.

In the progress of this little sketch of Aunt Betsey's life you must have noticed that Providence never for long left her heart and home childless.

The older nieces married and gone and the nest empty, there is on the way a little newcomer ready to enter and take possession, and her welcome is all the more tender because her coming is the consequence of the saddest of all bereavements.

By the death of Mrs. Dawson McCormick, Aunt Betsey's youngest sister, the Florinda of our first chapter, a little daughter, Anne by name, was orphaned, and Aunt Betsey at once asked to have the care of her, while the two sons, Edward and William, both older than Anne, it was decided should continue to live upon their own farm, Cleremonte, under the guardianship of their uncles Mr. Charles and Dr. Cyrus McCormick.

With the advent of little Anne the one need in the new home, now called Aspen Hill, was supplied, and she became in all respects a child of the house. A new room was added to the already long wing that she might be near her aunt by night as well as by day. No mother ever devoted herself more to the well-being and good rearing of a child than Aunt Betsey did to her little niece. All the benefits of her previous experiences were lovingly spent on her. Newer systems of education had penetrated the Valley since Mr. Cleod's time and Anne had all the advantages of them.

A German professor of music led her "through the mazes of the hidden soul of harmony" up to a more than fair rendering of the classical music of that day, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven,—the hours of

practising the piano to secure this being often sweetened by Aunt Betsey's presence with her knitting at the child's side. Then came Madame Togno to open a French school, with all the accomplishments included. Anne was at once enrolled among her pupils. And lastly, with a very select class of five or six companions, from Mr. Breedin she learned her "steps" and took her first lessons in dancing,—square dances and the reels only! round dancing being looked upon as a foreign abomination. Indeed, in having Anne taught dancing at all Aunt Betsey went, I think, against the views and practices of most of her friends; but the recollection of her own dancing days as bringing much wholesome pleasure and no harm into her life prevailed over the very strict ideas then existing in regard to the giving up of all so-called worldly amusements, and the little girl was given a chance to "shake her foot." And it was good for Anne. Her life was stately for that time, but must have been a trifle lonely; for though the house was one of great hospitality, no child shared the recreations or the little duties of her daily life for more than brief visits until, when Anne was about fourteen years old, Betty McGuire, "Catherine's" daughter, came to spend the school year with her great-aunt and uncle,

and the nursery had a second occupant and Matilda an added charge.

My first personal and recallable knowledge of my great-aunt and uncle must refer to this time, about 1842 or '43, and it consists in vague chaotic pictures of occasions that impressed themselves deeply upon my child-mind. The first is where my beautiful mother, with her three young children around her, stands at the hall-door of "Shannon Hill" to welcome "Aunt Bet and Unc' Bush" (as we little Hammonds called them), who, being on an annual progress to the country homes of their nieces, are now due at hers; of the dashing up of a large carriage, gay with fringed hammer-cloth around the high seat of the coachman, and with fringed straps of the same colours on the back for the attendant "boy" to hold by; then immediately the descent therefrom of a short, stout, very ruddy gentleman, spic and span in the regulation dress of that day, carrying a stout cane in one hand and a palm-leaf fan in the other,—a man of presence, and one whose autocratic nature was recognized at once, even by the children. After him came a tall, large, bright-faced, smiling woman, with a cheerful greeting for every one, looking through her spectacles kindly upon the whole world,—and



that was Aunt Bet! Then came Matilda, very self-important and fussy about the comfort of her master and mistress, and very awe-inspiring to me from what mammy had told me were "Tilda's" views as to "manners" necessary to "quality children." The bustle of arrival once over, then came the distributing of toys, candies, etc., gifts sometimes from afar. Once I remember gaudy and beautiful bags of Indian work brought to us from a distant land called Niagara, a description of whose seething waters and enveloping mists made me and my dear partner in all wild guesses and conjectures consider it the gateway to the "Miz." Now the "Miz" was a vague, mysterious under-world, revealed to us by name only in our oral commitment to memory of the fourth Commandment of the Decalogue. Prolonged researches in our quarto pictorial, "The World Displayed," had failed to locate it for us, consequently our imaginations rioted in the immensity of the mystery. Niagara came to our help, and the "Miz" took form and almost "a local habitation."

This visit, I can recall, was a time of much running about the place with Aunt Bet, holding on to her skirts and talking to her of all things in our ken, from the "garter stitch" that our eldest was trying to

learn to knit on two needles to the military funeral we had lately attended in Charlestown, hearing for the first time the roar of cannon and the inspiring music of fife and drum, and the "ball" to which our dear, indulgent father had taken "our eldest," that she might stand by her mother's side when she opened the ball with President Tyler.

Aunt Bet was the most patient and interested listener to a child's prattle that could be imagined, never betraying the patience but making the interest felt. Now, on the other hand, we never thought of prattling in Uncle Bushrod's august presence. There the feeling was of being on parade and the expectation of military discipline, generally an order of "banishment to your quarters" for any violation or even meditated violation of good temper, good manners, or obedience to your elders. And yet in his own way "Unc' Bush" was kind and generous to children. He seemed to grow into a respect for those who had the spirit and courage to explain and justify their conduct when he had called it in question.

It was in July, 1844, at the age of six years, that I paid my first visit alone to Aspen Hill to be mothered by Aunt Bet. The advent of twin sons in our own home at Shannon Hill made it a convenient sea-

son for the little daughters to go a-visiting. Mildred was to go to our Aunt Florinda, Mrs. Strother Jones, at Vacluse and I was to be domiciled in the nursery at Aspen Hill and given over to Matilda's morning and evening ministrations, but otherwise having the run of the house, yards, flower-gardens,—but not the orchards.

I was greatly distressed at parting with my dear father and Mildred, even for a short time; but I restrained my tears and Matilda bore me off to bed, the hour for that important function having arrived. Well, the disrobing and bathing were over at last, the room was "tidied up" and put in exasperatingly good order, and I was lifted into a great high bed. Oh, how I missed our rather noisy little dressing-room, and mammy's amusing talk as she presided over the bed-going! I felt deserted and forlorn, and was beginning to cry for Mildred and Willy, when Aunt Bet appeared to tell me good-night in her cheery way; laughter took the place of sobs and I was soon happily sleeping. The next morning everything appeared in a rosy and beautiful light. I breakfasted with the grown-ups, sitting at Aunt Bet's side, with Billy Taylor, her pet dog, at my feet, and using for the first time in my life a solid-silver fork. Breakfast over,

Uncle Bushrod presented me with a penny, a copper coin about as large as a silver dollar and called "a cent," telling me that I could spend it at "George Smith's." This offering was repeated every morning of my visit, and was as regularly spent at "Unc' George Smith's" cake-shop, whither I trotted attended by a small maid called Mary Robison, and followed by Billy Taylor, my constant companion. "Billy Taylor" was wise enough to have been my sole guardian. His nose never deceived him, and often running ahead of us we found him on our arrival at the dingy little shop quietly waiting at the door for us to demand an entrance.

I can perfectly recall the impression Aspen Hill made on me at that time. It seemed to me grand and beautiful. To know it in its greatest beauty, however, was to see it in May and June, when the lilac hedges that enclosed the grounds on three sides were bending under their fragrant bloom, and the lawns, dotted here and there by great clumps of blossoming shrubs, syringa, snowballs, laburnum, and Japanese cherry-trees, were in turn shaded by tall walnut, aspen, locust, and American mulberry trees, the last mentioned of great size.

The house presented a long, white, green-shuttered

front, broken in the centre by a quaint porch, whose pointed roof had for its front the Greek pediment. The architecture was not colonial, as we now understand it; too comfortable and not stately enough to meet our idea of the word, the porch being the only suggestion of that order of building. The exterior feature that at once caught my attention was the large flagging of white marble (I think) that extended from the lowest step of the porch to the sward on two sides and to the driveway of tan-bark on the front. It was enough raised to answer for a stepping-stone to the carriage, and broad enough to accommodate several large chairs and various stools and cushions. Here the gentlemen seemed naturally to congregate, smoking their cigars in the freshness of the morning and in the soft summer twilight. Visitors from the town would stroll up, sit here, or pass on to the porch or hall or parlour, wherever the ladies of the family had for the time being assembled.

The "stone step" was Uncle Bushrod's favourite seat in warm weather, and his vantage-ground. Here in his large rocking-chair, delicately handling his cigar, in the intervals of the talk he could cast his eyes over the gardens where seasonable work was always being well done, then to the pastures where

his fine imported cows contentedly chewed the cud or his colts, hearing his voice, whinnied for a recognition, over the lilac-hedges and the tall towered front gate on to the spires of the historic old town; thence, passing beyond, they might linger on the grey ruin of the old Lutheran church, standing a mute reminder of the past amid the glittering monumental stones rising to commemorate the newer generation, to rest finally on the beloved encircling mountains whose summits are ever tinted with the colour of hope.

During this visit I, too, loved to sit on the stone step and listen to the endless talk of my two great-uncles as they sat smoking, their cigars lighted from a glowing coal brought in a pair of little brass tongs, made for the purpose, by a little negro boy, made also for the purpose, apparently, for I never saw him do anything else. It was from these talks that I got my first impressions of the charm of travel. My Uncle Griffin had travelled in Europe, spoke French fluently, and was much interested in what happened in distant lands. My Uncle Bushrod and Aunt Bet had just returned from a trip through Canada, a month at Newport, and a long sojourn in New York city, bringing home with them my Uncle Griffin, his

wife, and grown-up daughter to visit the Virginia kinsfolk.

One scene enacted on the "stone step" has always remained with me. I can close my eyes now and recall it in detail. It must have been my first sight of the weird and grotesque, and the deep impression made upon me was due to that. It was the dancing of a "double rigadoon" by Aunt Vi'let. Aunt Vi'let claimed to be the daughter of an African chief or king. She also claimed to be the oldest member of the Taylor family, and from these distinctions she arrogated to herself much importance. She had been freed by my great-great-Uncle Bushrod for some act of faithful service, and was living in Winchester, and of much renown among the people of her race and colour. I had never seen or even heard of her, when the small gate at the end of the avenue opened and a much bedizened, very black little woman entered and briskly walked toward the house. When near enough for her exaggeratedly African features to be recognized, my great-uncle said, "There's Vi'let." This told me at least her name, but of her species I was still in amazed ignorance. I now know that she belonged to the same type that Thackeray depicts in Gumbo in "The Virginians," and

knowing the two makes me better understand each. Mincingly Aunt Vi'let approached, and with each step some new grace was added. When she reached the hedge where the path turned to the kitchen and its yards she tossed her head with some contempt in that direction, walked rapidly to the stone step, made an elaborate curtsy, and immediately began the dance. Spinning to the very centre she there executed the most intricate "steps," keeping time with the swaying of her arms and the waving of a fan attached to a long ribbon hanging from one wrist. From the centre she would dart to the corners, and poised on one foot would "do" a butterfly act, then back to the centre, spinning like a dozen dervishes; again to the corners, and so on, over and over again, until, almost exhausted, she suddenly dropped a curtsy in the centre and stood there simpering like a modern danseuse. Her dress was strangely incongruous, the most noticeable article being a high poke bonnet trimmed both inside and out with large and heavy wreaths of what had once been brilliant white and red roses. After much applause and a generous contribution to the "reticule" that balanced the fan, Aunt Vi'let explained that, hearing some of the "fambly" from the West were visiting Aspen Hill,



she, being the oldest member, had come up to pay her respects. Then laying aside her airs and graces, and with a "curtsey" of a different character, she took the path to the servants' quarters. I followed, hoping to see another "double rigadoon," but Matilda promptly interfered and restored me, not without a strong protest, to my own more exalted but far duller sphere.

From the stone step and the front porch you entered in summer by Venetian blinds, in winter by a heavy brass-trimmed door, a hall that ran through the house with a similar porch at the back. From this back porch a broad brick walk ran the length of the yard, bordered on the left by a row of splendid old mulberry trees; on the right ran the wing containing Aunt Bet's large chamber and the nursery, then a second wing containing servants' rooms, kitchen, laundry, etc. All of these—walk, wing, trees, etc.—all ran down hill until they came to a white fence that divided the yard from what we called "the lot," where everything began to run up hill, until just on what seemed the sky-line a group of really magnificent walnut trees guarded our domain in that direction. I say domain, for "the lot" with its fine nut and fruit trees, its peculiar rock formations of terraces,

shelves, and boulders, was, of all places, the one we enjoyed most, and where we led our outdoor life.

If the front porch invited one at certain hours and seasons the back porch had all seasons for its own alluring attractions. There something active was always going on. Every day, soon after breakfast, Aunt Bet held her court there, and thither came all of the servants to receive their orders or suggest (?) changes; after that hour the machinery of that well-ordered establishment was not observed, only its comfortable results were enjoyed by all.

Here the bird-cages were hung and all the household pets came at will. If Aunt Bet and I stepped down the brick walk the clucking bantam with proud strut brought her brood to be admired, and "Billy Taylor," always our attendant, was too well trained to cause the flutter of a feather in that watchful mother's wing; the tame doe Fanny would feed from Aunt Bet's hand; and the peacocks with their magnificent outspread tails would follow in our wake, as if to add beauty and dignity to the morning progress of the mistress through the "yard."

Here, too, Aunt Bet was wont to see the few pensioners that needed or claimed help from her. There were very few of the extreme poor in Winchester;

such, however, always found their way to her, sure of speedy relief, and from the "back porch" the steps to store-room and smoke-house were but few and often taken to fill the empty bag or basket. But who will ever know how constantly she tried to meet the needs of those "who had seen better days," and how quickly, almost secretly, such aid was given?

ON the 2d day of February, 1847, our dear young mother died, leaving six children, the oldest of whom was in her tenth year, the youngest a delicate baby in her fifth month. In his bereavement my father yielded to the urgent proposal of Uncle Bushrod and Aunt Betsey that he should break up his home and come and live with them, in order that we, the children, especially the baby, should be under Aunt Betsey's care. The baby, poor, precious little mite, looked as if she would not long give any one either joy or care. So, with our nurses, etc., we removed from our own home, and from this time on the two families made but one. Aunt Betsey's heart and hands seemed all-embracing; each one of us had an especial place, but to the baby and to the little twin brothers—these three being the youngest children, she had ever under her wing—she devoted herself with a mother's love.

Cousin Annie was away from home at boarding-school in Staunton, and Uncle Bushrod, absorbed in the rebuilding, refurnishing, and re-establishing of the hotel, which the year before had been burned to the ground, had closed the house at Aspen Hill and gone to the hotel to live, that he might better superintend the carrying out of his many plans. In this way our Aunt was in a great measure free to adjust her time and ways to the new cares she had so readily and heartily taken on herself. She deeply sorrowed for my mother's loss; and I can imagine that it required all of the wonderful cheerfulness of her temperament to bring any brightness to the family circle shadowed by my dear father's unspeakable grief. She succeeded in time. Now, in my mature years, I feel that gratitude for her unceasing care of his motherless children was the first thing that aroused my father from a grief that was gradually undermining his health and strength.

As the months went by the little baby began to thrive; and the twin boys, Tom and Harry, grew daily in beauty and sweetness of disposition; they were happy and soon forgot they ever had a different life. We three older children had a vivid recollection of our life at our beloved Shannon Hill; we con-

stantly recalled our mother as the most beautiful and benign personality that we had ever seen in our short lives. She became the most exquisite picture in our memory, our standard of all things lovely in womanhood, and so has remained. . . .

For a year past my brother Willy and I had attended an ideal primary school, where with six little friends we enjoyed the care and teaching of Miss Mary Augustine Smith, the range of her house and garden, and the indulgent affection of her mother and all the family. We were very happy. We learned how to read and write, we studied our little maps, did our little sums, planted our little gardens, and made friendships there that lasted.

The autumn after my mother's death this school was discontinued, whereupon my father and Aunt Betsey decided that Mildred and I should now attend the same school, an excellent one kept by Mrs. William Bent at Ambler Hill. This was a very wise decision, as all of our outdoor pleasures were now taken together, and our walks to and from school were times of most intimate companionship. From this time I seem able to date the steady influence of my dear sister over my impulsive, almost passionate nature. She was not quite two years older than I,

but she was wonderfully mature in judgment, while I seemed never to grow out of a very childlike dependence which put me easily under the influence of my own impulses as well as those of others around me.

The daily life in our new surroundings was most comfortably ordered. We received, possibly, too much indulgence, that fault, if it were one, having its source in the great sympathy our elders felt in the loss to her children of one so endowed as our mother. I cannot recall that Aunt Bet made any rules of conduct for us. She gave Mildred and me virtual independence, and we repaid it, as I remember, with a strict allegiance to what we thought right and true and honourable. Little Willy had a very mild discipline exercised over him at the excellent primary school that he attended,—outside of that his life was ours; while the twin boys, always together, were never very far from Aunt Bet's sight. I can see them now as so often, when tired of play in their nursery, they would come into the "chamber" and, drawing up their little red-covered "ottomans," would perch themselves on either side of Aunt Bet, as if that were their recognized and undisputed place. They were most lovable children, and their days were bright and happy.

In May, 1847, my Uncle Bushrod became ill, suffering intensely from what was supposed to be a carbuncle on the foot. An operation was performed upon the place by his friend and physician Dr. Hugh H. McGuire, but it could not eradicate the disease, and after weeks of great suffering he died July 14th, 1847. During all those anxious days and nights Aunt Bet rarely left his side; indeed, her presence seemed essential to his very life, my father and a young friend, John Ambler, being the only persons he cared to have in her place when she went for needed rest and sleep. She has often told me that in that sad time the one thing that would bring a smile to Uncle Bushrod's face was the daily visit of the baby, Flo, who, after her morning bath in the glow and freshness of a new day, would be brought to his bedside and for a little time would make him forget his pain.

I have failed in the portrayal of my Uncle Bushrod in this little sketch if you do not see him as he was, an upright, intelligent, and enterprising man, a foremost citizen in the two communities in which he had passed his short and active life of fifty-four years. He stood for the best things and the best methods in civic life. He was interested in and liberal towards

all educational and religious institutions and enterprises, and most generous, in his own way, to dependents. He was progressive beyond his neighbours in all of his ideas, and energetic in executing them. As I have shown, he had strong faith in the natural development and permanent prosperity of his country and worked untiringly in his own small corner of it to speed the beginning of that time. In short, he had all the sturdy qualities and virtues of the men who sowed the seed of the prosperity that we at present reap. Along with these commendable traits, however, he possessed a regrettable one, one that naturally grew out of the institution of slavery existing at that time in the Southern states. He was autocratic and imperious, as much so as Frederick the Great; unlike him, however, he exhibited these qualities only to his equals. To children, to the poor, and to his servants he was most kind; and to the sick he was gentle. He was by nature combative. For himself, his friend, his party, "right or wrong," he would fight to the bitter end. I doubt if he knew how to compromise. He did not encourage any difference of opinion in his own household. There his word was law, but it must be admitted that he strove to be just to all. The comfort of his servants was cared for most scrupu-



lously; they in turn served him faithfully and affectionately, and deeply mourned his death. The only detail that I can recall of his funeral was the long line of men and women servants, each wearing a scarf of crepe on the hat or arm, that followed the hearse as the procession passed through the streets of Winchester.

The death of her husband left our dear Aunt in a condition of complete prostration,—the sole occasion in her long life when she was unable to rally the forces of mind and body to the needs of the day then present. It is more than likely that her cheerful interest in all things about her would never have returned in a large measure but for the claim of the children whose guidance and care she had taken upon herself. This responsibility never slept, and in response to its call she nerved herself to take up the old routine of life.

My father and her two lawyers, Messrs. Barton and Williams, helped her much by their advice and counsel, and after settling and arranging certain business affairs she determined to re-open the Aspen Hill house and return there to live, just as Uncle Bushrod had planned to do whenever he should be satisfied of the smooth running of the newly-built hotel. This

decision was hailed with delight by "all of us," for to us children the memory of visits to Aspen Hill was of times of "unceasing pleasure and unqualified delights." We made many trips backward and forward to see that our own especial pets and belongings were housed as we wished, and early in May the flitting was made and we were installed in what proved a most happy home, a place of cheer and comfort in the lives of many, a place of sweet and tender memories, whose very name must bring a gentle thrill to those who are left of

"The kind hearts, the true hearts,  
That loved the place of old."

The family now consisted of Aunt Bet, my father, and six of us, three girls and three boys. Cousin Annie was soon to return from school and complete the circle.

To meet our needs some changes were necessary in the internal arrangements of the capacious old house. The nursery built for Cousin Annie's occupancy was now presided over by our good nurse "Mammy," though the baby had her little crib at Aunt Bet's side. The baby had developed a tendency to sudden attacks of croup, and therefore nightly preparations

were made for the dread visitor. A little scarlet flannel gown was hung at the side of her crib, the ipecac bottle and hot-water jug placed near by, and a log put upon the fire. There were many false alarms, but also some serious times. The whole nursery crowd was often wakened by the hoarse cough, and gently tiptoeing in would find the baby in her red gown lying limp on Mammy's substantial knees, while dear Aunt Bet, nervously anxious, fluttered and hovered about, watching and waiting with true maternal solicitude. The office that she had for so long desired, the care of a baby, had come late in her life, but there was not one of the functions connected with it that she was willing to waive or forego. Willingly would she "have given hostages to Fortune" would that secure her the presence of children in her home; and now having them they were hers for weal and for woe.

Aunt Bet's eldest charge, Cousin Annie McCormick, had come home from boarding-school a young lady quite grown, and now began many entertainments for her and her circle of young friends. It seemed to me then that her life was one round of gayety,—doubtless a *débutante* of this period would call it "flat, stale, and unprofitable." To me it was the first

glimpse of what was meant by the phrase "a grown-up young lady," and I never tired of the reflected enjoyment I got from it.

To be admitted to her room when dressing for a "cotillon party," and standing by her dressing-table watch Matilda braid her beautiful hair, piling it tress after tress into a crown to be finished by a wreath of delicate jessamine flowers or tiny tea-rose buds, just gathered, was a joy and delight still fragrant in my memory.

We were in fact the children of one family. Mildred and I felt the pride of younger sisters in all of Cousin Annie's sweetness and her little social triumphs. To wait upon her, run her errands, gather flowers for her, were among the pleasures of my long summer days. Mildred soon filled a higher sphere. She became a confidential friend and close companion. Cousin Anne was much less impulsive and demonstrative than we little Hammonds, but her love and friendship were deep and lasting. This she gave us, my father and his children, in increasing measure to the end of her life.

Aunt Bet was very busy and very happy with her seven children all at home. In the largeness of her heart and the openness of her hand she found the

means of making for them a family life that was broad and generous enough in its scope to allow the growth and development of individual character. We were all very different in disposition, and we were not repressed and curbed in a way to make us all of one pattern or form. We united, however, in one characteristic,—we had high spirits and loved fun, and were at times a little daring in pursuit of it; but our liberty never became license, and the most enduring lesson we learned from the beauty and order of the daily round of life, and better still from the constant example of Aunt Bet's unselfish care for the good of all, was a consideration for the rights and happiness of others.

At the close of this summer, when our life was becoming thoroughly and happily adjusted to its newer conditions, we had a great sorrow. Our dear Harry, one of the twin boys, became ill with inflammatory rheumatism. After weeks of pain and exhaustion the disease attacked his heart and in September, 1848, the patient little sufferer died. I sometimes wonder if there ever has been as beautiful and lovable a child as that little brother was, or a sufferer of any age who so patiently bore pain. Harry had a charm of countenance and bearing and a no-

bility of nature that called out interest and affection from all whom he met, and the passing away of that little child of six years was a sorrow which the whole community shared with us.

The greatest sympathy was felt for the "one who was left," "Tom," for until Harry's illness the twins had rarely been seen apart. They did everything together, and now it seemed impossible that little Tom could live without his constant companion and loved playmate. So to ward off a sense of loneliness he became the one that every one chose for a child friend; and when the schools opened in the fall Aunt Bet made Tom a little bag for his slate and book, "we all" put up his basket of luncheon, and he was taken by my father and duly entered in a class of boys taught by a sweet woman, one of Aunt Bet's friends. Two boys gone from the morning's play and romps made a great change in the nursery!

The winter of this year, 1848, seems, as I recall it, the earliest period of my connected recollections of Aunt Bet's life and occupations. Up to that time memory flashes vivid pictures of her appearance, talk, and action that at the moment of occurring deeply impressed my childish imagination, and that I can at will recall. But from this time on as the centre of our

family life, the mainspring of all movement, the source of rewards and discipline, she is rarely absent from the scene.

The nursery communicated with the "chamber" by a narrow passage called an "entry," in which narrow space were three doors, two opposite each other opening respectively into the rooms, and one at right angles to them leading to a large bath and dressing-room, a recent addition to the wing. When the play among the children grew fast and furious, the two opposite doors could be closed and Aunt Bet's chamber still retain its air of dignified quiet and repose; but usually these doors were wide open and we overflowed into her room at all hours of the day and night too, quite sure of a distribution of sympathy either in our fun or pain, whichever was making the claim. She was, however, more apt to side with the boys, seeming to look at our "discussions" from their point of view. If any very serious "stepping aside" had been committed, the case was adjourned for our father's judgment, generally a most indulgent bar! In the winter Aunt Bet spent her mornings in this bright sunny chamber. It might indeed have been called the family sitting-room, for we all clustered around her there. There she cut out and planned

with the seamstress the dainty little garments that she loved to dress little Flo in, and used her really great ingenuity in fitting the little boys' jackets and trousers, which were to go from her hands and inspection to the tailoress to be made, for such things could not be bought in those days. When an outfit for any of us came to a successful issue the pattern would be carefully cut from it, pinned together, marked with date, and put in the pattern-box. No change of patterns or new fashioning of garments was considered until we outgrew that particular kind of apparel; then, of course, we were promoted to the garments suited to that age. Mildred grew so rapidly that her promotions came fast and early. I grew so slowly that in this race I was a terrible laggard, and I sorrowed accordingly. For spring and fall Mammy and Lucinda would appear, as regularly as the lilac blossoms or the falling leaves, with their arms full of our pretty little frocks of last season to be tried on under Aunt Bet's eye before buying new ones. Mildred had so sprung up in each interval that not one could she wear, but, woe is me! I had stayed where I was six months ago, and I could wear both hers and mine. An added blow was in the fact that, being usually gowned alike, I was provided by an unkind fate with



two dresses the exact counterparts of each other, and with so large a supply that new ones, even *a* new one, would be a burden. Now this was an affliction for which there seemed no alleviation. There seemed nothing for me but to go out from the presence and weep bitterly, which I usually proceeded to do. I even once, when resorting to nature for comfort, essayed a sonnet on my wretchedness, comparing my condition to the trees and shrubs, "robed in new and fresh leaves and buds." Why I continued this course of action I know not, for usually on my return from these outpourings of my soul I found Aunt Bet was ordering for me a "seeded muslin" for the May party or a new merino for Christmas, or some frock equally desirable in my eyes, and sharing the duplicates with some of the numerous little cousins or friends.

In the "chamber closet," on the same shelf with the pattern-box, was another box, deep, square, and covered with a flowered paper of quaint designs and faded colours. The bringing out of this box always caused a thrill in the group around Aunt Bet, and its opening an exclamation of delight. Tenderly handling the contents one by one, Aunt Bet told us its story; and we were just as interested at each repetition,

though the details were so well known to all that should a break have occurred any one of the little audience could have taken up the tale and carried it on to the finish. First came a gown of white brocaded satin, so short in the waist and narrow in the skirt that it seemed made for a child; resting upon that and carefully folded in a man's linen cambric handkerchief of enormous size was a yellowed wreath of orange-blossoms; then came a pair of long white kid-gloves with silver embroidery on the back of the hand, and a pair of very pointed tiny white satin slippers (for Aunt Bet had inherited the Stribling foot),—and lo! we had before us her wedding array and Uncle Bushrod's wedding handkerchief. There was still another treasure to be brought from the box, and we waited till a small, much skinned morocco case was produced, and each of us allowed in turn to open it and gaze upon the jewels it contained (for such they were to us): a pendant breastpin and earrings of seed-pearl, with a tiny diamond blinking away in the centre of each. But the climax is reached when Aunt Bet holds up to our gaze an infant's cap of lace and embroidery, "made for your little Cousin Elizabeth Bushrod." Oh, this is sacred! and we press with mute sympathy against the arms that have lov-

ingly encircled so many children and yet not one of her very own, for "our little cousin" did not live to draw even one breath of life. With tender and reverent touch we restore the cap to its cover and think of the little one for whom it was made as a companion to Harry among the angels.

The box is closed, the story is finished, and Aunt Bet sits quiet, gazing into the coals that are glowing on the hearth, for it is the twilight hour, and we children with deep drawn sighs of surfeited imaginations are recalled to the present by Lucinda with lights, and off we scamper to the nursery to be made ready for the coming home of our father and for tea. That dear old chamber! If walls had tongues no novels were needed.

AUNT BET did not confine her activities to her home circle; many outside topics were discussed in the "chamber," many questions of church and state there debated and decided. As president of the benevolent and sewing societies of the parish she saw to the making up the clothing and the distribution of food and money to the comparatively few pensioners connected with the parish. She was also one of the collectors for the educational society, but

her most active work was in connection with the sewing society, for through its efforts all of the expenses of the church, excepting the minister's salary, were defrayed. The work done by this society was usually accomplished in the winter, then when the summer brought an influx of visitors and boarders to the town of Winchester the baskets were stored with the beautiful and useful articles and really large sales were made. This method is a very general one at present, but fifty years ago it was a pioneer movement, and originated, I have heard, among those intelligent and active women who had but small opportunities of widening the sphere of their influence, but who did "what they could," and did it with a will and heartiness that compelled appreciation and finally co-operation.

We juniors were allowed a branch society, of which Mildred was made president, and we were most delighted when allowed to furnish a table with our own work at one of the fairs held by the parent society. All the preliminary talks for these undertakings of "high emprise" would take place in the "chamber" between a chosen few, but about once a month a "committee of the whole" would be held, the whole house would be opened, and the "high tea" served

then on small tables anywhere and everywhere. Sometimes these meetings would be enlivened and our touch with distant lands be quickened by the reading aloud of letters from our missionary in Shanghai about Lucy Balmain's health, progress, etc. This was most interesting, as Lucy Balmain was a Chinese girl whom we were bringing up and educating to be an Episcopal missionary to her own people when she should reach the desired age and intelligence. At last Lucy Balmain wrote us a letter with her own hand; receiving this gave us a new incentive to work for her, though it must be confessed she did take a long time to arrive at the desired age! Sometimes our fingers did flag a little at the work, but a letter from or about the faraway child always revived our interest. All this was fifty years ago, when the doors of the Flowery Kingdom were not only locked but barred and bolted to outside influences. Chinamen could only be seen on exhibition in museums along with other oriental curios, and not a Japanese had ever set foot on our land, for it was ten years before Perry made his expedition to Japan ending in a treaty that opened her ports and set her sons a-gadding.

As for the affairs of state that were discussed in that little corner, they were but local issues. Aunt

Bet was an earnest Whig, and in all the municipal and county elections, whenever the vote became extremely close and the fear of a "Democrat getting in" roused all to action, she would be notified of the danger; whereupon she would promptly get a list of all the sick, decrepit, or aged Whigs who might be kept from the polls by such infirmities, and the day of election would send her carriage to take them to the polls, where they would be received by their side as "saviours of the commonwealth," and where sometimes their votes secured them the day.

In the spring we had a very gay household, for wedding-bells were rung for the marriage of our dear Cousin Annie on the 17th of May, 1851, to Mr. John Waite Stribling of Staunton, Virginia, but at the time of his marriage a resident of Baltimore.

Aunt Bet warmly approved of marriage, especially of early marriages, and delighted in making a wedding occasion one of general jollity. Therefore, weeks in advance of the day exhaustive preparations for the event were begun. Our nursery was turned into a sewing-room. Matilda, who has disappeared from these pages because of her own marriage and settlement in life, would hear of no one but herself doing certain dainty white work for her dear "Miss

Ann," now returned and became once more an important figure in the household corps. Making a trousseau then meant the laying up of a wardrobe that should last for years; and as Aunt Bet did everything generously, the quantity of dainty garments made up in the nursery must have been a burden to inventory and to keep.

In those days the wedding feast, like the trousseau, was the result of home talent; therefore, "Aunt Alcey," a famous cook, was allowed to increase her staff at her own whimsical pleasure, while Charles daily drilled raw recruits for his dining-room service. The all-pervading atmosphere of preparation reacted strongly upon me. For the first time within my memory I "crept like a snail unwillingly to school," and raced home upon the moment of dismissal, fearing some box or trunk of "trousseau" had arrived and been unpacked in my absence, or some cake of huge dimensions had been frosted with new and original hymeneal devices and I not there to watch the progress and commend the result. For a week before the wedding-day the guests had been arriving, until the old home was filled to overflowing with "bridesmen and kinsmen and brothers and all," as well as young cousins to the remotest degree of cousin-

ship. The bridesmen, Anglicè groomsmen, and the sweet girl cousins and friends had a beautiful time in the merry month of May under the fragrant lilac plumes and the white blossoming syringa trees. How young they all were, and how beautiful life was to them!

Our Uncle William's marriage two days before, on May 15th, had given to us a charming young aunt, who became more and more dear to us all as time passed on. These two young couples, having the same circle of relatives and friends, shared all the entertainments consequent on both marriages, and when the round at Aspen Hill was closed all the members of both wedding parties went down to Milton Valley, Grandma Taylor's home in Clarke, and reopened it there. This was the way in Virginia in those days for the newly married. No isolation, or seclusion, or distant journeyings, but the sharing with those who loved you your new-found happiness. Many trials must have attended that way, but it also had its compensations.

We missed our dear bride, but school life claimed us, the children, for a month longer, then Mildred went down to Grandmama's, being considered old enough to join in a tentative way the throng there; while I



was indulged in a course of light reading and allowed to roam among the books in the house and choose for myself. From my late absorption in affairs of the heart I chose, from its title, "The Bride of Lammermoor," and followed it immediately by "Kenilworth." Thus, at ten years of age, seated in the low branches of a clump of morello cherry-trees, I fell under the spell of the good Sir Walter—may his fame ever increase!

Aunt Bet allowed it, and my dear father, for a time, encouraged this idle dream-life, by talking over the characters and scenes with me, and so started me on a course of the best reading, opening to me a recreation and pleasure that has never lessened or palled.

Our bride came back after a few weeks and stayed all the summer; then in the early fall she left for her new home, all of us helping with the getting ready for the flitting, and adding some mite of our own work to the plenishing to "remind her of home." I recall the delight of the cook, Aunt Alcey of great renown, when her loaf of especial size and kind, made for the travelling lunch-basket, called out a hearty commendation from "Miss Ann," and I also remember the somewhat doubtful encouragement in her speech,

"No, ma'am; you won't git no bread like that in the place where you'se going to."

If it be true of years, as some one claims of lives and nations, that the happiest are those that have no history, the next few years were the happiest that were spent at Aspen Hill, for they were calm, peaceful, but uneventful in their flow. It was a period both of sowing and reaping to our dear Aunt, and a period of growth and development to her charges.

The winters were busy times for the four of us at school, but Aunt Bet's time of leisure for carrying out her plans for us and for her church work. When the summers came we had to share her with many guests. "Cousin Annie" always came home for that season, bringing with her new claimants to our love in baby boys and girls; cousins came from Cincinnati with their children, and friends from everywhere. By the time fathers, mothers, babies, nurses, and maids were lodged the old house was filled from garret to cellar. Aunt Bet, seated on the back porch with representatives of three generations around her, was the fountain of experience and advice earnestly asked for and followed by these young matrons; while the "brick-walk" resounded with the pattering feet and piping voices of a younger group of bairns, and the waving

lilacs gently fanned to sleep the latest baby in its softly crooning nurse's arms.

This being our vacation time we four older children paid our annual visit to Grandmama Taylor at Springsberry, a time of great enjoyment, or "went on the cars" to Charles' Town to see our "Cousin Jane" or our Aunt Burnett. Flo, however, was not trusted so far afield; she was kept at home at Aunt Bet's side. In the fostering warmth of very tender care this once fragile baby had grown into a fair, round, golden-haired child, full of sprightly grace and charm, still the willful darling of our family circle. She assumed quite an oldest-sister air to the visiting infants, leading them into all kinds of mischief and also very cleverly out of the same. She was a recognized leader among her age and kind, and a great favourite at the little school that she attended.

These years might be called our student years. Strictly speaking, however, we read more than we studied. Though no reader herself, Aunt Bet had an instinctive respect for the life of thought and study, and gave Mildred and me every aid and opportunity to pursue such. The quiet dining-room was given up to us for our study hours in the afternoon, and no one was to interrupt us without

cause. Sometimes a slight note of wearied patience might be detected in her voice when, looking in upon us there, she would find us drawn up close to the fender, the great log-fire burnt out to ashes, the room almost in shadow, and we, with cheeks flushed and eyes feverishly brilliant, far away from our material surroundings, off in the realms of imagination with some favourite poet, entirely oblivious to the gathering chill and gloom.

Another wish of hers was that we should speak French fluently. She thought greater progress would be made in this accomplishment if Mildred and I would speak it at home as well as at school; so often, when sitting alone with her in her chamber, she would say,

“Now talk a little French with each other.”

We, knowing that such a course would entirely destroy the free range of this twilight talk, would reply,

“Then we can’t talk with you, as you don’t speak French.”

“Never mind that,” she would say; “I like the sound of it. Go on.”

Thus directed, Mildred and I would commence a string of colloquial phrases from Collot, memorized probably for our last lesson, or rush into one of those

wonderful dialogues from Ollendorf treating of "your grandmother's cow" or "your uncle's black horse." And once I remember repeating—with a villanous accent, I am sure, but in a conversational tone—the whole of the little poem beginning, "*Pauvre feuille détachée.*" But the crowning success would be the repeating of that stirring roll-call, "*Allons enfants de la Patrie.*"

Many many years after these childhood days I was reminded of our Aunt's fancy for listening to a language that she did not speak in noticing her great enjoyment when the Psalms for the day were read to her in Latin by Mr. Sullivan; she said she loved "the stately music of that tongue." She loved music, and had a very correct musical ear. She gave to my practice hour the same attention that she had given years ago to Cousin Annie's, but without the same satisfactory result. I never played the piano well enough to give her pleasure, but she liked to have me sing to her.

In these quiet growing days Aunt Bet was much to our brothers. She had great enjoyment and sympathy with the two boys in their school work, in their plays and in all their recreations. She seemed wonderfully to understand the needs of growing youth. She

was quick to see that a Saturday's nutting expedition, a long tramp through the woods with their guns, a "tournament" ridden at full speed, an afternoon's swim at "Daub's," used up their strength; and after such days she easily condoned the absence of a toilet at supper or the long deep sleep of the tired boy stretched out in all the grime of the woods upon the couch in her chamber, or granted his plea to be allowed to sleep late into the next day, though that meant absence from church, a thing to be regretted. The two boys were now at the Academy, an old and reputable school, the playgrounds of which adjoined Aspen Hill. Aunt Bet thought this nearness a great advantage, as it kept the boys away from town. It certainly brought the town boys to us. The latter counted upon a welcome at lunch or any other time, when leaping the fence, scrambling through the hedge, a troop led by Willy or Tom would suddenly descend upon Mary (an understudy to Lucinda, and now promoted to the care of the pantry) and cry out with the lungs of famished schoolboys for something to eat,—bread, ham, and pickles being the viands most desired.

Writing Lucinda's name reminds me that it was at about this time that we lost her valuable services, and

to us children her enjoyable companionship as a singer of sweet old songs and an unrivalled teller of quaint old tales. She married the principal caterer of the town, and left us to go to a very exacting life as his partner and chief assistant, cook, and everything else that required an alert mind and a refined manner. Randall was a member of the Episcopal Church, so Lucinda and he were married by Dr. Walker, our own rector, and in our dining-room, where we all assembled at the service, Mildred and I having previously dressed the bride.

The marriage tie set lightly upon many of this race, and therefore whenever one of our young maids decided to marry Aunt Bet ever wished to have the occasion invested with all the influence that the regular church service, read by a white minister of standing, could lend. This did not always suit the contracting parties, as they often preferred the personal and impromptu address of some "brother" of their own color and persuasion.

Indeed, in all respects this good and thoughtful mistress tried to elevate the tone of morality and good living among her servants. And, take them all in all, they were good men and women, doing their duty as they saw it. As far as efficiency was con-

cerned, I have but rarely met their equals. Our servants thoroughly appreciated the privileges of their home, and were loathe to leave it for any cause save matrimony.

From its very inception, in 1817, Bishop Meade, then a very young man, had been identified with the settlement of Liberia, on the east coast of Africa, by the American Colonization Society, seeing in it a great scheme of Christian and patriotic benevolence; namely, the gradual freeing and returning to their own country the negroes of the South, and through their instrumentality introducing the blessings of religion and civilization among the wild and savage tribes of Africa. In 1819 he made a crusade in behalf of the plan, travelling from Boston to Florida, addressing assemblies, preaching in churches, publishing pamphlets, and in every way boldly standing forth its advocate and supporter. The "Plea for Africa," a sermon by him, was a powerful appeal to all classes and sections and aided much in the final establishment of the society and colony, after which his personal agency was no longer needed. His zeal, however, in the cause of the colonization society did not slacken; it had been kindled by the hope that, though in its principles and actions the society was distinctly limit-



ed to the free people of colour, it might ultimately lead to some arrangement for the removal of the entire coloured population without violence or wrong. He offered to free any or all of his servants (his patrimony) who would emigrate to Liberia, and urged this course upon his congregations at the time of his visitations, for he rarely omitted on these occasions to make a plea for better religious and other instruction of the coloured people among us.

In one of his progresses through the diocese he stopped to see Aunt Bet,—always Betsey to him,—and by the earnestness of his convictions he brought the vague thoughts and hopes that she had long entertained on the same subjects to a definite decision, and she determined to follow his example. Knowing that coloured people are more easily led by the eloquence of their own race, Aunt Bet took into her confidence “Unc’ Frank,” who might have been considered the Nestor of the quarter, a personage of influence among all of our servants.

She explained the scope of the enterprise to him, and then empowered him to make the offer of freedom, an outfit, and a passage to Liberia to any or all who would go there with the missionaries soon to sail. The old man stood and heard all with the

silence of a graven image, and then walked away solemn and sad. Aunt Bet was astonished; she had looked for some show of enthusiasm, she saw nothing but the signs of grief. However, she had not expected an early answer and so prepared herself to await their pleasure in announcing the momentous decision. It was momentous all around, for should the offer be accepted it meant to her the breaking of very close ties created by years of responsibility in caring for the well-being and happiness of people without any liberty of action, but who were entirely dependent on her will and pleasure. It meant the lifting of a grievous burden from her life; but was it best for them? Could they stand alone? Could they do without the will that led them, the care that daily supplied them with food and shelter, any better than so many children could? It was a complex problem. She could now only wait for them to speak. At any rate she had not long to wait; an hour's time brought Unc' Frank back. He said he had talked with all, and "all felt very much mortified and hurt, that after their love for 'Mass Bush'od' and herself, and their years of faithful service to the fambly, she could think of sending them away from her, and especially to Africa, to live with wild 'niggers,' lions, and tigers."

The incident was closed. From that time the servants all seemed more satisfied with their good home than ever, wearing an air of serene and also triumphant contentment as if some question of public interest had been inconsiderately thrust upon them for decision, and was settled once and forever!

The missionary ship duly sailed from Baltimore, but without any one from our household, though several emigrants went upon it from Winchester. Their sad fate verified our old coachman's fears, for we learned some months later that they had succumbed to one of the dreaded dangers of that coast—the African fever.

In July, 1855, Mildred left school, and without any formal *début*, for the latter was not the way in our Valley, took her place in society as a grown young lady; a condition of affairs most agreeable to Aunt Bet, as offering more occasions for the gathering of young people together and their hospitable entertainment. Among Mildred's friends and contemporaries in Winchester were many very attractive young women and men, and the life was informally and wholesomely gay. All kinds of "parties" were in vogue, and in default of evenings enough for the round of parties given the afternoon lawn-party was

introduced,—no croquet, no tennis, no archery, just meeting together, laughing, talking, walking, and sometimes music and dancing on the grass. This sounds too simple, probably, to be considered attractive, and yet I recall those Aspen Hill lawn-parties as among the most charming occasions I ever mingled in. I have never seen any gathering that so much resembled them as a garden-party I once attended in London, given under the auspices of the Princess Mary of Teck. There I saw the same informality, the same grace, affability, and simplicity in manner, dress, and entertainment,—in a word, the same good breeding.

In the fall of this year the circle at home was lessened by the absence of two of its members. Mildred went to Cincinnati to be absent some months, and I went away from home to school. The breaking up of a very excellent school in Winchester that I had attended obliged my father, in opposition to his preference for his daughters, to allow this. I was sent to Staunton to the diocesan school established by Bishop Meade, and stayed there ten very homesick months. I think I should have given up and run home but for dear Cousin Annie's sweetness and goodness to me.

Soon after my return Aspen Hill was once more filled with the stir of wedding preparations, and this time the bride was to be our dear elder sister Mildred. She was to be married to Mr. Algernon S. Sullivan of Cincinnati early in the month of December. The peal of the wedding-bells was not to our ears so glad-some as when as children we had heard them before. The dominant note now was one of farewell, and we could hardly bear to face the moment of separation or think of life without the presence of this dear sister. I fear we older children were selfish in our sorrow at what we determined to think was giving her up to "another," though we had already taken that "other" to our hearts; but, fortunately, Aunt Bet's prophetic satisfaction with Mildred's future and her hospitality kept up the spirits proper to the occasion, so much so that the many wedding guests from afar and near long recalled this event as a typical Virginia wedding.

I recall that we had queen's weather, that on the wedding-day, December 13th, 1856, the sunshine, the cloudless blue sky, the blossoming chrysanthemums and hardy roses, made winter seem a fiction; and when a few days later Mildred and Mr. Sullivan drove

away from the door to begin their journey, it was in a shower, not of rice, but of flowers from the borders and garden of the old home, amid the tearful good-byes of kinfolk and the loudly ejaculated blessings of the dear faithful servants.

The succeeding summer is one to be remembered. All the absent ones came home,—Cousin Annie, Cousin John, and their children, Mildred and Mr. Sullivan; and many others came because of these. The old house rarely had been so full; and dear Aunt Bet was very happy in the ever-growing family ties and their opportunities of loving service. It proved the last time that we all, an unbroken family circle, gathered at her call and around her in that home so loved, and by so many.

This summer might be called the “last of an era,” for none that succeeded it seemed to have the same character or to belong to the same series even. Something of serenity and joyousness, very intangible, was passing out of our lives,—not of “ours” alone, but of all around us. As I look back upon it now, with the experience of all the intervening years, I recognize what I could not then name, but indistinctly felt like one groping in the dark, an unrest coming from a dissatisfaction with existing circum-

stances, a yearning desire to better them, and a horizon so narrowed and contracted by the existence of the very evil that we wished to cure or eradicate that we seemed shut out from a new or brighter light on the vexed question.





## Age.

**F**OR two years past my brothers had been at "Howard," near Alexandria, the Episcopal high-school of the diocese of Virginia, and my father's wish was to put them, on leaving there, into active business life. This desire, coupled with other interests, suggested Baltimore as a better place of residence for the family than Winchester, and upon Aunt Bet's ready acceptance of that idea he determined to remove there. In May, 1858, Aunt Bet sold Aspen Hill to General Fauntleroy, and after passing the summer at Capon Springs, and later several months of preparation for our change of residence at the hotel in Winchester, we removed to Baltimore, to a very comfortable new house, 74 Cathedral Street, that had been built for my Aunt. My brother Willy was already in business in



that city, and my father at once placed his second son, Tom, in an excellent situation to be trained in insurance and banking business. We were, however, not more than established in our new and comfortable surroundings when my dear father's health, that for some months had caused us anxiety, entirely gave out, and after seven months of great suffering he died, January 8th, 1859.

From the August before his death we knew from his medical advisers that recovery could not be expected; therefore our efforts were directed to keeping him in the greatest comfort possible. Mildred was unselfishly spared to us all of this distressing time, a joy to our beloved father and the greatest support to the rest of us; and whenever it was possible her husband joined her for short and to us all most helpful visits. Cousin Annie, sorrowing over the loss of a baby boy, came home for comfort and to see my father once more, spending the weeks of her stay largely in his chamber and at his side, finding in the spiritual peace that pervaded the place (for he was already supported by the "peace that passeth all understanding") the strength-giving quiet that her soul sought. In fact, all of us, from Aunt Bet down to the youngest servant, seemed but to live for him, so dearly was he loved, so

patiently did he bear his sufferings. Had we no other cause for gratitude to our Aunt, her great sympathy with our dear father, her tender care and solicitude for him, and her cheerful, encouraging companionship in all this time would constitute a never-to-be-forgotten claim. On the other hand, she considered him the closest of all her friends, her tried and trusted counsellor, and when he was called from us she was scarcely less bereaved than we his children, her dependence upon him had grown so great. Can there be a greater loss than the loss of a beloved father? My father gone from us, all things on earth seemed changed.

Aunt Bet's influence, however, kept our family life a strong reflection of the old one, and we children—but three of us now at home—did our best to carry out her views and wishes, knowing by this we would best fulfil our father's hopes. In all the months of my father's illness we had grown accustomed to seeing Willy in my father's place at table and also exercising other smaller functions as the head of the family. Aunt Bet now installed him in this position, and he, dear youth of nineteen, had so much sweet modesty in his nature and gentle dignity in his bearing that he did not seem out of place even though among the

friends visiting us we had kinsmen thrice his age. I realize now that we put decisions upon him whose consequences he was too inexperienced to foresee, and that out of our very love and confidence we overweighted his executive strength. We went frequently down into Virginia, and our Virginia friends came often to us. Cousin Annie and her family came to us the winter of '59, returning to Virginia for the summer. She came again in October, '60, bringing with her a new claimant for love, a beautiful, rosy-cheeked, laughing boy (a few months older than George Sullivan, my sister Mildred's only child), Edward by name, soon shortened by us to "Ned," and by which name he will be known through the remaining pages of this sketch. We soon saw that Cousin Annie was most frail and delicate, with an alarming and constant cough; nor did she seem to gain strength from all the care, medical and home, that Aunt Bet bestowed upon her. Daily she grew less and less fitted to bear the time of stress that many around us were foreboding, and I, the oldest one at home, shared all of our dear Aunt's concern for her and her children. My brother Tom had left home and gone on a voyage to China. So that we had our private anxieties as well as the grave concern that all classes were beginning to feel

in regard to the unhappy national excitement upon the question of slavery.

The political outlook was anything but reassuring to the South. The great statesmen who had wisely held in check the intemperate prejudices of both sides to the controversy over slavery were fast passing away from the field of their glorious struggle, and none arose to catch the standard as it fell from their stout grasp. The people of both sections, North and South, seemed the victims of an unreasoning and impetuous action, of a sectional rancour that triumphed over true patriotism. In fact, the public sentiment was manufactured by a few violent, self-seeking demagogues, who were fast leading the country to a point of danger from which it could not recede. In October of 1859 came the dastardly attempt of John Brown and his followers to seize the arsenal at Harper's Ferry, with the hope of getting the guns stored there and setting up in the neighbouring mountains an asylum where fugitive and rebellious negroes might meet and form their insurrectionary plans. To the honour of the coloured people of that neighbourhood whose faithfulness he sought to corrupt, let it always be remembered that John Brown's six months' work as a propagandist secured him no known fol-

lowers, and that the first blood shed in his attempt to capture the town and arsenal was that of Hayward, a faithful negro night-watchman on the bridge across the Potomac, who lost his life in the defense of the railroad property entrusted to his care. The thinly veiled approval of this outrage by a large party in the North, and their scantily expressed sympathy with a community barely escaped from the horrors of a servile insurrection, caused great uneasiness in all parts of the South, and greatly stimulated the opposition to the Republican party and the possibility of a President elected by it.

The unfortunate division of the Northern and Southern Democrats insured the election of Abraham Lincoln, the Republican candidate, which event was followed in December, 1860, by the passing of an ordinance of secession by the South Carolina convention, and in February, 1861, seven states had seceded from the Union and formed a government called the Confederate States of America, having its capital at Montgomery, Alabama. The conservatism of public opinion in Virginia had up to this time held her aloof from this compact. Though deeply sympathizing with her sister states of the South, Virginia would not leave the Union which she had done so much to create un-

til every means had been tried to perpetuate it. A convention was called at Richmond to consider the course the state should take, and the strain upon its members became more and more intense as the rapidly succeeding political acts of both North and South seemed to point to an inevitable issue. Whatever may have been their views on the subject of secession as a right, a large majority of the best and most thoughtful people of Virginia were opposed to it in fact, and their exertions were applied more and more to avert the dreadful evil of Disunion. The capture of Fort Sumter, however, on April 12th, 1861, precipitated the calamity. Two days later President Lincoln made his call for 75,000 volunteers to "put down the rebellion." The governor of Virginia refused the demand, and the secession of the state followed, April 17th, 1861.

The long strain was over with the casting of that die, and with an enthusiasm supported by a steadfastness of determination that has rarely been equalled the men and women of Virginia made ready to uphold the traditions of the grand old commonwealth, to do and to die in her defense and in obedience to her laws.

In our home in Baltimore we were one with our

friends in Virginia, and though miles apart we had trod every step of that *via crucis* together; and what solemn dirges our hearts beat the while, hoping and praying for a peaceable settlement of the question!

We were in constant communication with our friends in the Valley, and especially with our dear Willy, who had been for a month past visiting in Jefferson and Clarke; and therefore, when he wrote us that he had joined the Clarke cavalry, First Virginia Regiment, and been ordered to Harper's Ferry, we were entirely prepared for his action. We prayed God to guide and guard him. We believed he was enlisted in a just cause, in defense of his native state and in support of her constitutionally guaranteed rights.

We have now reached a period that I feel but small inclination to dwell upon, so sad and cruel was it while passing, so appalling were its consequences; and even after long years of the study of both sides of the conflict I am not sure that I can picture it impartially. From this time on I seem to have partings only to chronicle, for our household was soon broken up. Upon joining the army in Virginia Cousin John Stribling had been stationed at Lynchburg, and dreading the possibility of being cut off from him by

the military occupation of Harper's Ferry and other points on the border of Virginia and Maryland, Cousin Annie was urgent to leave Baltimore at once and join him. She was too frail to make the journey unescorted save by her children and their nurse, so I arranged to go with her. We made our preparations and left so promptly that we got out of the city before martial law was declared or passports required or the bridges on the Baltimore and Ohio railroad destroyed. Our day's journey was uneventful, and near the close of it we reached the long bridge across the Potomac at Harper's Ferry. Here we found our own Clarke cavalry doing outpost duty, and were received by them with an ovation as the first "refugees." Our bonnie boy Willy was there, not in grey, but in a red-flannel Garibaldi shirt, looking soldierly, brown, and ruddy with restored health. There too was dear Uncle Will, in command of the company that day; and also we found, to Cousin Annie's great pleasure, her brother, Cousin Edward McCormick, busy bringing his trained intelligence to bear upon the problem of forming and running a quartermaster's department from the promiscuous offerings of teams, wagons, horses, and forage made by the neighbouring farmers and planters. To us travellers the confusion seemed



beyond adjustment, but this was not the reality. A certain bugle-note sounded, and these newly made troopers fell into line, company by company, and with the steadiness of trained soldiers rode to their respective stations for picket duty, the infantry sentinels were posted within the town, guards were mounted everywhere, the "details" that had worked by day went now to supper or to sleep, and the last rays of the sun rested on an orderly, vigilant camp. We were escorted through the guards to the Charles' Town turnpike, and looking back from the Bolivar Heights feasted our eyes and hearts on the quiet beauty of the scene, —both village and camp in twilight repose, the great mountains shadowing them as with a mantle of protection, while the wavelets of the Potomac lapped the banks with a music as sweet as a mother's lullaby.

Cousin Annie, I, the children, and the faithful Amy spent that night at "Burnley," the home of my Aunt Ann Burnett. She sped us on the next day to "Clere-monte," the home of Cousin Edward McCormick in Clarke, where Cousin Annie would be in a second home. I paid a hasty visit to dear Grandmama at Springsberry, back to see how Cousin Annie fared after the journey, then a day and night with Willy "on leave" at Burnley, and with him to Harper's

Ferry on my way back to Baltimore. These five days had wrought many changes at Harper's Ferry. Jackson had arrived and been put in command of the place as a colonel of Virginia Volunteers, and had begun the organization of that brigade which was to win with him an imperishable renown; and J. E. B. Stuart, a lieutenant in the regular army, was put in command of the companies of cavalry coming in from various parts of the state, for up to this point Virginians only were on the field. The stir of successful preparation, the eager enthusiasm of the soldiers, the sympathetic energy of the women and their heroic suppression of anxiety and distress, had greatly cheered me; therefore, in returning to Baltimore I hoped to impart to Aunt Bet a measure of the same spirit. But the news of Cousin Annie's contentment and her improvement from the change to the mountains was the only good cheer I brought her. The future looked very dark to her. The possible cutting short of lives dear to her and full of promise was too terrible to contemplate, and at first she would not consent to the necessity of resistance, but would have asked for peace at any price. From her age and experience she was better fitted to appreciate the gravity of the moment than we younger people, whose enthu-

siasm for the justice of our cause was boundless and whose ignorance of the resources of those opposing us was equally so. There was another point on which we were woefully ignorant—the opinion of the whole world in regard to us. We were now for the first time to clearly see ourselves as others saw us,—to realize that we of the South were looked upon by a large portion of our fellow creatures as voluntarily upholding and fighting to perpetuate an institution execrable to God and man, that institution being in reality the greatest burden to our finances and the heaviest responsibility to our hearts that as a people we carried. Next to the bringing up of the children of a family came the care and consideration of “the people,” i. e., the servants. The children came to years of manhood and discretion; “the people” remained in lifelong pupilage and dependence. Could there be a greater burden to the class that owned?

As I have said, my Aunt read the threatening signs of those times better than we, and with her usual prompt decision in doing she made all the preparations in her power to meet the storm. She resolved to retrench her daily living expenses, as the larger portion of her income was derived from property in Virginia, and therefore broke up housekeeping,—stored

furniture, books, silver, etc., settled her house-servants in homes of their own choosing, and then she, Flo, and I went to Mrs. Pendleton's boarding-house on Charles Street to stay until, led by the course of events, we could make some definite plans for the good of all. Mildred and her baby boy George joined us in that most homelike place of sojourning, spending several weeks with us. All that time we were so busy cutting, sewing, and making a soldier's outfit for Willy, and sending it piece by piece, through outgoing volunteers, to him at Harper's Ferry. The last package to go was a large military-looking cloth cloak of my father's, which we thought preferable to an army blanket when sleeping on the otherwise bare ground, and wrapped in it an old-fashioned "heavy dragoon" sword of my Grandfather Hammond's. The cloak, which we had sent more from sentiment than practical thought, proved invaluable, being as steadily on picket duty as the company itself, in turn covering almost every member of it. The old sword Willy carried until he armed himself with a better one captured on the field of the First Manasses. . . .

Our plans were finally completed. Aunt Bet decided to stay at Mrs. Pendleton's in Baltimore, a half-way station where Mildred could easily get to her if

needed, whence she could maintain a regular correspondence with Virginia, going there at once should a need arise, and lastly where Flo's attendance at a very excellent school might be uninterrupted. I was to go to Virginia, with what might be termed a general and roving commission: to keep near Willy, if possible, to attend to the family business affairs there, and to do what seemed best to do all around and everywhere,—but above all to watch over Willy and Cousin Annie, and to keep Aunt Bet informed of all that concerned them and the many so dear to her. Every day it became more difficult to leave Baltimore unchallenged. I dared not delay; so, accepting the escort of our friend and physician, Dr. Philip Williams, who had a permit to go to Winchester, with trunks almost bursting with contents declared contraband of war, with a large sum of Virginia State money—useless in Baltimore, but still at par in the South—to be used as I saw it was needed, weighted down with private letters and despatches sewn in the hems and tucks of my skirts by the faithful maid Mary Robinson, I took leave of my dear Aunt and Flo, and with a trembling heart—for I really dreaded, with all my show of indifference, the questioning of the provost-marshal—we steamed out of the old station at Cam-

den Street. Fate was good to me. We reached Harper's Ferry in safety. How sadly changed all was since I had seen it six weeks before! Now grim-visaged War palpably brooded over the spot, and I began to realize what was before us. My Aunt Ann Burnett had come to meet me there. Willy I did not see, he being absent on a "regimental scout" up the Potomac. The second day after my arrival at Burnley Aunt Ann drove me up to Cleremonte to see Cousin Annie, that I might promptly report her condition to Aunt Bet. I found her apparently much stronger and very happy, and, writing at once, fortunately got that "bulletin" through before the evacuation of Harper's Ferry. At the end of this week Willy spent one short afternoon with us at Burnley, and when he mentioned, on mounting to leave, that his rendezvous was at the Opequan, I wondered what was happening, but had already learned enough not to ask. We were soon to know. The early morning of the next day, June 16th, showed us all the roads, lanes, and by-ways crowded by the Army of Northern Virginia, high-spirited and in fighting-feather, falling back from Harper's Ferry and concentrating on the roads leading to Winchester and Martinsburg. From this time these beautiful counties of Jefferson and

Clarke became the "debateable land," and except when Jackson made a hurried march to free them were rarely without troops of occupation. Thus a military cordon stretched between them and our army, making intercourse dangerous and very uncertain. Many families unwisely left their homes in this borderland and "refugeed," keeping as near to the army as possible, leaving their homes to the mercy of stragglers, and, when the numbers of such non-combatants increased, embarrassing the forces in arms.

Under these adverse circumstances I was able to accomplish only a few of the many things I had hoped to do in coming to Virginia. I could add to the comfort of my brothers, both of whom were now with the Army of Northern Virginia; I had been fortunate in communicating with Aunt Bet and Mildred, and so relieving the strain of suspense after any battle in which the brothers were engaged; but, alas, I could do nothing to stay,—I could only watch the ravages of dear Cousin Annie's illness. As the summer was ending she grew daily weaker. Hoping for good results from a change of surroundings, we took her to Springsberry, where she always loved to be, for the month of September. No improvement resulted, and we returned to Cleremonte,—her brother's home

and her own birthplace,—where, watched and tended by most loving friends, she lingered with us until the late November, when her pure, sweet spirit returned to the God who had created it. This was crushing news to send to my dear Aunt, and I fully realized how impotent she would feel, under the existing circumstances, to carry out the dictates of her heart and gather to it the three children left motherless. The cruel exigences of war prevented all attempts at such a course. She could not for months make an arrangement to come to the South by any sanctioned mode of travel, and “running the blockade” offered dangers and difficulties that none of us wished her to risk. Calling up all of her courage and patience, having the great support of Mildred’s and Mr. Sullivan’s sympathy and advice, she bided her time, not yet without hope that all would be well with the land and people she so loved.

In the mean time the best arrangements possible had been made for the children. Cousin John had decided to take the two younger children, Alice and Ned, to his sister’s in Staunton, hoping that from the strategic position of that town it would long remain within our lines and thus he would be enabled often to see them. Taylor, the eldest, was to accompany



his Uncle Edward's family to Amherst County and there be placed at a good school. These satisfactory details I was able to send to Aunt Bet through the kindness of scouts or through other more mysterious messengers who were frequently passing to and fro between the lines. Of regular and recognized mails beyond the Potomac we had none. Every day the blockade of the long river line became more difficult to elude, and Aunt Bet's many efforts to reach Virginia in that way were fruitless. At last, in the early winter, through the great kindness of Mr. Richard Wallack, then mayor of Washington City, a passport was issued for herself and Flo to travel from Washington to Fortress Monroe by a United States flag-of-truce boat, to be transferred thence to one belonging to our own people. Aunt Bet had so often been turned back on the very eve of starting that when Mr. Wallack's letter arrived telling her of the success of his efforts in her own and Flo's behalf she could not feel sure of surmounting the difficulties that blocked the way. However, his influence removed all from her road. The natural exaggeration of prejudice that existed in that excited time made her feel that going to Washington was wilfully putting her head in the lion's mouth, and therefore this first step was

the hardest to take. The kind hospitality, however, of Mr. and Mrs. Wallack turned this dreaded trial into a pleasure, one gratefully remembered, and after this happy send-off the short voyage as guests of the United States government was accomplished without unpleasant incident, save the unavoidable one of personal search and the obsequious attentions of women spies and detectives.

It was a sad home-coming,—all was so changed. The closing of many homes in the lower Valley had crowded the towns and cities within our lines with a population far in excess of the means of comfortable housing and living. In the end the great influx of people, many of them without means of support excepting by official employment, became seriously embarrassing to the government, taxed to the utmost even then to feed the army in the field, the inmates of the hospitals, and the prisoners of war. Far from the scene of actual war, Aunt Bet had but little realized its grim and fearful details, the wounds and pangs inflicted in its daily course, the demoralizing influences left in its wake. Her first acquaintance with these sad features of the conflict was most depressing. The contrast of our poorly equipped hospitals, whose furnishing had been largely the contribu-

tions from private homes, the meagre comforts of our sick and wounded, with the abundance and luxury provided for their sufferers by the North forced upon her mind a consideration of the great inequality in all material resources of the struggle we were engaged in; and she confessed to a disappointment in everything but the spirit and capacity for heroic resistance by the men, and an equally heroic endurance by the women, of the South. After a short stay there she gladly left Richmond and went to Staunton, where, quite comfortably established at the Virginia Hotel, she and Flo were fully compensated for their disappointments and failures by several visits from Willy, who was stationed at Gordonsville, and by a daily visit from Alice and little Ned. Staunton, by its location, was a military clearing-house, and thus Aunt Bet was fortunate in seeing many of her relatives when passing through, and placing herself in communication with many members of her family and many old friends. She had hoped, in coming to Virginia, to help in hospital or other relief work; but, beyond giving liberally of her means to this and also to private and individual needs, she soon saw there was no field that she could enter,—there were so many women helpers and, alas, so little to do with.

The constant shifting of the theatre of the war left entire uncertainty in regard to any one locality being long free from invasion or occupation. Staunton seemed a quiet and safe point. A change of service made it convenient for my brother Tom to be in Staunton in the early spring, and for some weeks he was with Aunt Bet and Flo. I joined the three in April, making my trip through the Valley safely. We had then a cavalry detachment under Rosser at Harrisonburg, and all seemed quietly and permanently held by our forces. The outlook was promising for our family reunion, possibly for the whole summer. We at once began to make summer clothing—Aunt Bet cutting, Flo and I sewing—for my two brothers and for some young Maryland volunteers who were especially dependent upon friends, being unable to have help reach them from home and the supply furnished by the government growing more and more scanty as the war dragged on. We were very busy, and more than content, as a short spell of tranquillity had fallen upon us. Spring was with us in its great beauty to soften some of the rigours of the time, and blossom and shade were concealing the war-worn aspect of the town. Suddenly and without warning the streets were filled with cavalry hurriedly passing south,

our forces from Harrisonburg were falling back, commissary and quartermaster trains were packed and started from their various depots, and then the news flashed over the wires that the Army of the Potomac had begun a forward movement. The next few days the quiet of the deserted town was oppressive. The storm of preparation and departure had passed over it, leaving only, stranded in the hospitals, the weak, the wounded, and the dying. Then came the news of the great victory at Chancellorsville,—dearly bought, for it cost us the life of Jackson,—and there could be but little rejoicing until each heart was satisfied of the safety of its own loved ones.

Lee's great movement in the rear of Hooker's army and then on across the Potomac to western Maryland and Pennsylvania, in the last part of June, was the consequence of the great victory at Chancellorsville; and by forcing the concentration of Union troops around Washington he freed the Valley of Virginia of Milroy's army of occupation.

This happier condition of things offered an opportunity for the refugees from that part of the state to return to their homes. Many families availed themselves of it,—some, the optimistic, with the idea that Washington would now be taken and the war speedily

ended; some with the patriotic intention to plant, to sow, and perchance to reap harvest for the use of our devoted army and people; and some to keep in touch with the army in whose ranks were the husbands, fathers, brothers, of all the homes throughout the land, and to which the Valley of Virginia had given, not of her best, but all of her best, men.

Aunt Bet's little party, led by a mingling of the above reasons, determined to take advantage of a free highway and go at once down the Valley, Winchester being the first stopping-place that she might see her lawyers there and pick up the loose ends of her business affairs. Taking the best half of the seats in a lumbering old Concord stage-coach, we set out for our hundred-mile drive,—Aunt Bet, Flo, myself, and, last and least, little Ned, the gayest, brightest, most rollicking fellow traveller that a war-worn party ever fell in with. "Everything was grist that came to his mill," and we had not more than left the town of Staunton behind us before the other passengers (four military men hastening to join their commands) were his sworn comrades, enjoying his incessant prattle and gay laughter even more than we, if that could be. This child, who now entered our family life, becoming one of us, was about three and a half years old,

very stout, but not particularly rosy, with a large head and face, beautiful soft brown eyes, and golden curls. Sturdy is the word that gives the best all around idea of him. Dressed that warm June morning in a little purple-and-white muslin full-waisted dress, with plump bare neck and arms, short socks showing equally plump and strong legs, and a broad-brim Leghorn hat shading his laughing eyes and yellow curly head, he made a picture of merry childhood not to be forgotten. If his dress and curls raised a question of whether he were boy or girl, one look in his face, one rush of his sturdy legs, one blow from his square, muscular little fist, settled the matter that he was a boy and very much of a boy.

We reached Winchester in due time to find that the army had made a detour through Clarke and Loudoun, and so far had not occupied the town or its immediate vicinity. In Winchester we remained ten days visiting some very dear cousins, the Misses Holliday, two sisters who under great difficulties and privations had heroically remained in Winchester during Milroy's long occupation that they might secure their family home and keep the younger members together in it, while the father was absent within our lines in a position of trust and the oldest brother—but a lad—one

of Jackson's bravest soldiers. Aunt Bet became quite ill here, and my anxieties were much aroused lest the strain of the exciting passing events were more than she could bear. I felt quieter surroundings would be better for her, and moreover she greatly desired to be where the chance was greater of seeing the boys. On leaving our affectionate hostesses in Winchester we drove immediately to Springsberry, joining the large family gathered under dear Grandmama's hospitable roof; for, like Aspen Hill, Springsberry always had room for "one more." This family, with Grandmama its head, consisted of Aunt Gertrude and her four children, Aunt Eliza Tucker and her two boys, and various cousins, friends, refugees; sick, wounded, and tired soldiers, who were fed, rested, nursed, and then helped onward out of danger of capture; and lastly a large force of servants, many of whom were old and infirm, many of them children,—all to be taken care of, trusted, and helped by that trust to be faithful. "Uncle Will," from the first day of Virginia's secession, had been away in the army; he was now with Lee, tantalizingly near his home, and yet unable to visit it excepting for a short call. We had confidently hoped for more than this. In recognition of their long and uninterrupted service in the field the Clarke men



expected to have leave to visit their homes, and every preparation that home-made resources allowed was made for their reception, and indeed for the comfort of all who might march that way. We were, however, disappointed; they were in the saddle, on duty night and day. We were awarded one fleeting glimpse and word,—and this was much in those days of hurried meeting and parting. A messenger came to Springberry Saturday night to tell us that a division of cavalry would bivouack on the pike near Berryville early Sunday morning, and that we would find the Clarke company at a certain designated point. Of course we hurried there, and, as I have said, had one short hour in which so much was to be heard and told, so many messages to the absent to be received and sent. All too soon the bugles rang out “boots and saddle.” The mounting in unison was quickly done; with our own company leading, the division of compact, well-filled ranks, to the unmistakable music of the clank and trot of cavalry, defiled in the direction of the river at Castleman’s Ferry. This was the extent of our knowledge of the “forward movement.” When the last horseman passed out of our sight over the Cleremonte hill we turned to the church. A chaplain in field uniform was at the reading-desk; another from

the pulpit preached a sermon of high and holy faith. Everywhere among the congregation were soldiers whose voices rang out high and clear in the sweet familiar chants and hymns, and near the chancel, seated among friends and relatives, absorbed in devout attention to the service and sermon, sat our hero Lee. There was neither hurry nor stir to break the holy peace of that hour of devotion. The nesting martins and wrens brooded as quietly as ever in the eaves and corners of the mullioned casements, while the doves of the bell-tower stopped in their circling flights to rest as usual on the sills of the open windows. The very depth of the emotion called forth in all hearts by the occasion was quieting. The last hymn was sung, the benediction pronounced, and the dismissed people, reaching the porch, saw an orderly leading "Traveller" up and down before the door. The loved and trusted general and leader mounted, his staff closed up and followed him, and they too turned their faces towards the river. Lee had started to Gettysburg.

Again the tide of war swept on and left us in the Valley in comparative quiet,—a quiet that was not spent in any idle recreation at Springsberry, but in constant work and preparation for the good time that

we hoped and prayed might be coming. Grandmama directed, and George Young, the most competent and faithful of servants, at the head of the others carried out the farming operations on the large and productive Springsberry estate. "The people," most of whom were faithful, worked with a will; they wanted "Marse William," when he came back, to see that they had done their best. Special horses were taken under special care and training, that, if necessary, remounts would be ready for him; crops were cut and safely garnered; and flocks and herds were driven off to our nearest commissary camps. For a little space of time all was bright and encouraging. The splendid spirit of our army, the magic of Lee's presence, inspired universal confidence, and all classes rejoiced to be at work for a cause they loved and believed in. Our army once the other side of the Potomac, we were cut off from it and ignorant of its movement. We knew nothing of either the glory or the disasters of those first three days of July until, startled out of our hope and fancied security by the meagre reports of spent and wearied men struggling to catch up with their commands, we pieced together the terrible story. . . .

The Army of Northern Virginia retired through the

Valley. Once more, after their passage through the direst fire of shot and shell, we had those heroes with us. My dear brother Willy had been spared; two horses had been shot under him, and suffering from a slight flesh-wound he had made his way to us upon sacks of forage in an open army-wagon. Lying on the bed in her room he had a long talk with Aunt Bet, resting all the while and cheering us with his undimmed courage and hope. His new horse was brought to the door, all helped to dress and arm this offering that we made our cause of what was most precious to us, and in twelve hours after reaching Springsberry he rode away to join his company, which, being made the rear-guard, was the last to leave us. The Valley was once more given up to the occupation of Northern troops.

Very few residents left their homes and followed the retiring forces. A wiser spirit, born of experience, now generally prevailed, with the result that large property-owners stayed on their estates and with heroic determination kept up every possible industry, hoping to be able to add the proceeds to the fast diminishing resources of the country within the lines upon which the feeding of the army depended. In all households expenditures were brought down to the

narrowest point possible. The family table, though generally still abundant, was shorn of all variety, the only unchanged fare being that of "the people," whose wants were amply supplied long after a stringency began to be felt in "the house." All attainable luxuries of food or clothing were sent by the underground messengers to the hospitals, or carefully hidden away for some hoped-for visit from scouting parties, etc. The summer passed into autumn without bringing us hopes of soon having our army near or of any forward movement, and when finally in November the news came that Lee had gone into winter quarters on the Rapidan the conviction became a settled one that Winchester would soon be made headquarters of a Northern military department. The event proved our convictions well grounded. Sheridan was put in command, and the country was governed with an iron hand.

Aunt Bet was not strong, and the life of excitement and alternating hopes and fears for those dear to her was reacting sadly upon her health. Cut off from those she had hoped to be near, unable to make a home where they could gather and be nursed if ill or wounded, rather than remain in Winchester or Clarke under the military rule of provost-marshals,

and exposed to their inquisitorial methods and domiciliary visits, she preferred to return to Mildred and Mr. Sullivan in New York and await there the event, whatever it might be.

She had not contemplated such a step when she asked that Ned might spend the summer with her in Clarke. The child had been perfectly well and happy the whole time. Happily, like all children, he missed none of his former friends and caretakers,—not even Amy, his faithful nurse from the day of his birth,—and he had been a source of enjoyment to us all. To Aunt Bet he was a joy, and no plan could be hit upon that did not include the little fellow. His father, away from Staunton with the army, had not been able to make any very satisfactory arrangement for the child, as the overcrowding of all homes was beginning to be very seriously felt; he gladly consented to Aunt Bet's proposal to have Ned go to New York with her, knowing how warmly he would be welcomed in Mildred's home. This matter settled, we began to make preparations for Aunt Bet's journey to the North accompanied by Flo and Ned. Trains regularly running on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad were accessible to us at Harper's Ferry, now a strongly fortified and garrisoned point; but in order to board one of them

passports duly signed by commanding officers, oaths of allegiance to the government, promises to give "no aid or comfort to the enemy," and many other declarations and restrictions were required, none of which could these ladies conscientiously take or make. Therefore we must outwit or outgeneral our watchful foe, and our spirits rose accordingly. A few miles from Harper's Ferry was an unimportant station called Duffield's, unguarded, and used only for receiving or sending off sutlers' stores or farm produce. If we could cross the railroad track between two guarded points and make our way to Duffield's, the dangerous part of the journey would be over and the railroad tickets could be bought of the sutler in charge.

"Taking counsel of her courage," our dear Aunt said she was willing to run the risk. Leaving all of their best clothing to be used in helping those around, travelling with as little impedimenta as possible, we set out one lovely fall morning from Springsberry.— Aunt Bet, Flo, and little Ned the travellers, I (unwilling to part from them until safe on the train) a kind of conductor, and two gay young boy cousins twelve years of age who thought the whole proceeding a lark and made a joke of every difficulty we met and surmounted. We had received very explicit directions

for our route, and following them led us through by-ways and unused roads and lanes all bowered in autumnal foliage. Towards twilight of the second day we saw looming in front of us the telegraph-poles that outlined the railroad, and we knew that the supreme moment had come. Even our laughing boy-escorts became quiet, while cautious and steady "Uncle Jack," Grandmama's old coachman, peering up and down the track, noting all was clear, dashed ahead, giving his horses the whip for the moment, and in the shortest time we were over the railroad and so far safe. That night we were kindly entertained by a friend living very near Duffield's, and early the next morning we put Aunt Bet and her little party on board the cars, properly provided with countersigned tickets bought of the very accommodating sutler; and realizing that she was travelling on a military train under military escort, I felt no anxiety about her safety or due arrival in my sister's home. The end justified my confidence. The party reached Baltimore safely, and after spending a few days at Mrs. Pendleton's went on to New York, where a hearty welcome awaited them.

Except for anxiety for her friends in the South, Aunt Bet's life in New York would have been one of unbroken contentment and happiness. Great congen-



iality had since their first acquaintance existed between herself and Mr. Sullivan. She admired his character, loved his warm, affectionate nature, and expressed herself as uplifted by his companionship. The atmosphere of the home was such as she would have selected to environ her two young charges,—Flo, just entering womanhood,

“Standing with reluctant feet  
Where the brook and river meet,”

and Ned, just emerging from babyhood, but already evincing a strong and impetuous nature with the keenest sensibility to outward impressions and surroundings. George, Mr. and Mrs. Sullivan's only child, was but six months younger than Ned. The two children lived together, sharing all pleasures, likewise many small misdemeanours and light penalties. From the day of the little Virginian's advent through chance and change they were devoted comrades and friends. No happier fate could have befallen any child than to be reared in the glow of the warm but discriminating love that this great-Aunt gave Ned, and with the constant example of unselfish effort for the happiness and benefit of others that the daily life of the family presented.

In again taking up the daily round of maternal care Aunt Bet found employment that she loved, and the welcome results in the child's happiness and steady growth in all good directions counterbalanced in some degree the anxieties that all Southern people, no matter where their lot was cast, felt from the prolonged war. So, in doing the "duty that was nearest to her" our dear Aunt lived in present contentment and in strong hope that "foreign intervention" or some other providentially appointed means would bring peace to our land. In a lull of active military operations, and when least expecting it, the greatest blow that was left to befall her came in the death of Willy. He received a fatal wound in a cavalry fight at Reams's Station, Dinwiddie County, Virginia, June 29th, and died five days later, July 4th, 1864. Thirty-five years have passed since that sad day, and still the memory of this young soldier and patriot is green and fragrant. Among the few comrades of those strenuous times who still remain with us his name is a synonym for the knight "without fear and without reproach."

In this severe affliction Mr. Sullivan was Aunt Bet's greatest comforter. In the necessities of the dear child Ned she found that life still held opportunities and duties for her remaining years.

The heavy wing of grief shadowed these days. Personal bereavement tinged our thoughts and outlook, and the blue sky of hope grew more and more dim; yet we were entirely unprepared when the end came to those four years of unparalleled courage in resistance and skill in defense. That the cause dear to us from conviction of its justice, consecrated by the sacrifice of "manhood in glory"—the best in our land to sustain it, should go down in defeat was an intolerable thought; we would not—could not—entertain it. It came to that, and, thank Heaven! without dishonour. The laurels that the world accorded to our great soldier Lee and to his incomparable Army of Northern Virginia for their victories gained fresh lustre from their greatness in defeat. Time does not dim this. It but adds to its undying splendour.

THE end of the war seemed at first a virtual ending of all cherished hopes, of all prized conditions of life. Indeed, to our tear-blinded eyes and benumbed faculties the "eternal verities" themselves seemed for a time eclipsed or in hiding from us, the vanquished. Fortunately for us the actual needs of the moment pressed without exception on all classes in the South, and in work came our salvation.

. . . . .



It has often been said that in the olden time the code of virtue was to enjoy with equanimity the favours of fortune and to staunchly withstand her buffets. Newer creeds and codes had not undermined this bed-rock of character; it continually cropped out, and our Aunt was one of the many instances of its existence. In carrying out the first article of this old-fashioned code she had been conspicuous, and her present courageous attitude equally exemplified the second. The past was great and glorious to her—sunlit by an effulgence of patriotic endeavour; but we could not return to it, and the present was not entirely dark. Certain stars still shone, enough to shed a light upon the path of duty. In this light she steadfastly faced the difficulties of the present, and began to fit herself to meet them. The first step in this new path was to gather up any remnants of her former ample fortune and with them to set about making a home that might be shared by others even less fortunately left than ourselves. By the death of his father from camp-fever at the very close of the war Ned had become more than ever Aunt Bet's peculiar charge, and any arrangement she made would include him and probably his sister Alice. We—for my Aunt and I were making this venture together—selected Berry-

ville, in Clarke County, for our place of abode, influenced in our choice by the advice of many friends whom we would have around us and by the central position of the little town, which made it accessible to the few members of our family living in other places or neighbourhoods.

We had some difficulty in getting a house, the housing capacity of the village having been taxed to the utmost by the incoming from the country of families whose homes had been destroyed by military orders; for charred and blackened ruins marked many a spot in our Valley where once happy and hospitable homes had stood. We finally succeeded in getting a very small house, formerly used as the Presbyterian parsonage, and hoped to have it ready for our occupancy by the last of September. Among our minor losses had been that of the greater part of our household furniture, the warehouse in which it had been stored in Baltimore having been destroyed by fire; but we had still a good supply of linen, silver, glass, and some china, and we had no fear that our little home would be either uncomfortable or unattractive. Mildred came on from New York to help in our arrangements, bringing with her simple furniture that she had bought for us, far more suitable for our

cottage than our own would have been; and with our Aunt's remarkable talent for reducing chaos to order and transforming plainness to beauty the new home soon reminded us of the old one in its orderliness and neat comfort. We had engaged for our cook a worthy descendant of the Milton Valley chef of Aunt Bet's own early days, and our little waitress was a scion of our dear old Mammy's family; therefore we were not entirely at the mercy of the new order of the domestic institution, and felt that in the service that we received from our small corps there was a mingling of the respect and affection that marked the old order.

We moved into the cottage late one Saturday afternoon near the end of September. The next day half of the congregation called on their way either to or from church to welcome us as residents, many depositing baskets of flowers and fruits they had gathered in the sweet old-fashioned gardens before leaving home for the long drive "up to town" to church. The thoughtful kindness of our dear friends was shown in every way possible to them. The tie of a common sorrow, a common loss, brought us all very close together, and for a time, like the days of the early Christians, each shared with the other whatever

had been left in the bin or the store-room; and the smoke-house, no matter how often called to yield of its contents, could always furnish one more ham for some one just starting to "room-keeping," who possibly had recklessly married on the Surrender. We all learned some precious lessons in that time of adversity; but I now see much more clearly than I did at the time that then and there began to my dear Aunt a long line of renunciations imposed by circumstances, borne without a word even testifying to their recognition, and often gallantly turned to a prompt and unselfish advantage.

My Aunt shared with many of the most intelligent people around us a strong hope that in time some financial adjustment would be made by which the state of Virginia could restore to the banks the gold and silver loaned to the government, or that the interest upon the state bonds would be paid. In such case my Aunt would again have ample means. We could not, however, allow such a will-o'-the-wisp of a hope to lead us into a swamp of debt and difficulty, and our certain income being inadequate to our expenses, I determined to try and increase it.

I had always wished to be a teacher, not from any pride in special attainments,—these I was conscious

of not possessing in the degree that I should,—but because I loved to be with children, and also because of a general drawing to that vocation which is indescribable but which will be recognized by most all who have taught. When, therefore, my dear Uncle and Aunt of Springsberry asked me to teach their daughter, I saw my way clear to carrying out my cherished idea. Aunt Bet gladly consented to the plan; four other scholars were brought to me, the children of dear friends; all things smiled on the undertaking, and the Monday morning after our installation in the cottage was to be the opening day of my new career. Two of the five pupils, Annie Moss Taylor and Rose McCormick, were to live with us, coming after church every Sunday and going home every Friday afternoon; the other three, Minnie and Mary Marshall McGuire and my little cousin Rebecca Lupton, were day-pupils only. We fitted up a little school-room back of the parlour, and Monday morning found all things in readiness for the assembling of the school,—except the self-possession of the teacher; that had for the moment fled! Though I knew intimately and loved these young people, yet my shyness at meeting them in a new relation was so great that I stood wavering at the door, wondering if I could enter. But “needs



must," and I am quite sure that they never divined that "Cousin Hatty" was very near running away and giving up what she had so earnestly wished for, from an attack of stage-fright. They were dear girls, and intuitively we all did what we should have done. The ordeal was no ordeal at all. The organization of the little group into two grades was soon done; a course of study was laid out for each, a list of books given, a few rules made, and we were ready for dismissal. I left them to have a good time together, and flew across the little porch to the dining-room to put my dear Aunt's mind at ease, for well I knew that I should find her awaiting the event of the experiment with an anxiety no less than my own had been. Her pleasure in the result of the morning's work was the greatest encouragement I could have received. In a week's time one more pupil came, and a very interesting one she proved to be. I had not been wrong in selecting my work, for I soon loved my occupation,—possibly was too much absorbed in it to give the proper weight to the other elements of the life around me, and so, I fear, neglected much outside of the teaching that I ought to have done. Aunt Bet reigned supreme in the household, and, anxious to make of our venture a permanent establishment, she brought all of her know-

ledge and great intelligence to bear upon the problem of a housekeeping that combined economy and comfort. Her long previous experience had been so different in character from the present undertaking. Then the scale of living had been large and most generous, and the expenditure in proportion; now it was just the other way, and I often marvelled at her skill in overcoming the difficulties,—presenting always a comfortable and wholesome table, attractively spread and served, in a place where there was no market to order from, and with but a small income for the outlay. I think she enjoyed this tilt with adverse surroundings, in which she generally came out triumphant, and felt upon her mettle when, with the excellent cook, “Aunt Lucinda,” she took counsel over an empty larder, with no butcher nearer than Winchester, and yet, when the hour arrived, seated with a smile of satisfaction at the head of her table, she could dispense an excellent dinner to all of us gathered there.

As this year passed it brought many causes of contentment to Aunt Bet. Flo was now quite grown, and our dear Aunt took great delight in her attractive sweetness and beauty. She greatly enjoyed the sight of her pleasure in the social life of the neighbourhood,

and (as in the old time of Mildred's and my like experiences) always wanted to hear the "story of the party," who had been her partners, etc., before retiring for the night after Flo's return from some neighbourhood gaiety.

Ned, full of energy and importance as "the man of the house," was a large source of her contentment as well as the cause of her busy days. She placed him in a primary class taught by our friend Miss Virginia Washington, and she daily from her window watched him trotting across the intervening field, and from the minute he left our porch until he reached Miss Virginia's door she kept him well in sight. His hours were very short, then home he ran for his luncheon, and hoping that an errand "down-town" awaited him or his chosen friends "Rose and Bec" might be having a "recess" and would indulge him with their sweet company. Ned was now just as happy "as a bird on the bough." He was child enough to be the pet of the household; he was manly enough to be of use, and he liked to be so. He lived with his "Grandma," as he was taught to call Aunt Bet, more intimately, in a way, than any of us had done in the years of childhood. With the rest of us, nurses and maids had attended upon us and our wants, but in his case there

were no such intermediates. He shared his Grandmama's chamber, and under her instruction learned at this time to bathe and dress himself, becoming through this means the neatest and most methodical little lad that I have ever seen. His Grandmama was his chosen confidante in all matters, serious or gay, and this hour of the morning toilet was one of unflagging talk on his part, as any one passing near the chamber might know from the stream of words and the gurgle of laughter that floated out on the air. For his sake Aunt Bet revived other branches of the industry of her early days. She again took up the trade of cutting, fitting, and making a lad's jackets and trousers, for Ned was passing beyond kilts and shirt-waists. In fact, as far as possible she made his whole wardrobe with her own hands. Seated in the twilight before the log-fire in her little dining-room, with Ned and Rose on either side of her, they often busy popping corn or roasting chestnuts, her fingers fairly flew in knitting the long worsted stockings that Ned then wore. And the talk of the children kept time to the click of her needles. The scene was peaceful, and its influence sweet and strong. The spirit was the same that had brooded over the well remembered "chamber" at Aspen Hill,—one of loving fidelity to an accepted

trust and serene faith in the promise, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be."

The summer brought Alice and Taylor to spend their vacation with their Grandmama and Ned. It passed quickly and happily. Having received applications to take other pupils, we had rented and made ready two excellent schoolrooms in a house immediately opposite to our cottage, and there, on the first of October, we opened the school with thirty pupils, my cousin, Miss Holliday of Winchester, being my assistant in teaching. Two more young cousins, Ada and Mary Isbel, came as boarding pupils, living with us as Nannie Taylor and Rose did. These four young girls were singularly sweet and lovable. Their well-bred and affectionate deference to Aunt Bet under all circumstances was beautiful, and their presence in her home furnished her such good company that she more and more rarely left it for any purpose of recreation. Her nephew,—that is, her husband's nephew,—Dr. Bushrod Taylor, came to see her every evening, selecting to spend with her the hour just after supper, when she would otherwise be alone, as the girls were then having "study hour" with Miss Holliday or myself. "All of us" tried to make up to Aunt Bet the loss of Flo's constant companionship while the latter

was away in New York visiting Mildred and Mr. Sullivan.

This was a year of hard work in the school, the results of which were, however, so satisfactory that we felt quite justified in enlarging our borders, and during the summer vacation we were busy superintending the renovation of a large and very comfortable old homestead—one of the oldest in the village—that I had been able to purchase through the generous assistance of Grandmama and my Aunt Burnett. Here the third year of our school opened.

Aunt Bet felt very much at home in this house. She had often been a guest there as a child and young woman, and it seemed a strange fate that brought her back late in life to be its head and mistress. She now had a large chamber, opening on one side into the dining-room, on the other upon a back porch leading to the pantries and the kitchen,—the latter being very close at hand, but a detached building. All these arrangements were so convenient that she could now supervise the domestic affairs without fatigue. This chamber had pleasant outlooks from both windows, one upon a newly planted orchard and over that down the street and turnpike towards the mountains, the other gave a view of the yard and gar-

den. This garden was the great feature of the new place, and on it we counted for much of Aunt Bet's enjoyment and recreation. It lay in the rear of the house, basking in the sun, with wide grassy walks through it bordered thickly by currant and gooseberry bushes and shaded by gnarled old fruit-trees. Here she took her daily walks, moving slowly from bed to bed deep in consultation with Tom Page or George Field, the gardeners she preferred to employ. Not one old tree did she wish removed, and she planted many young ones. Willows were brought from Springsberry and set out around the cistern and pump. Clumps of hundred-leaf rosebushes were divided and separately planted along the line of new fencing to conceal its roughness and the glare of fresh white-washing. Much was done to atone for long years of neglect, and she also tried to restore some of the well-remembered pleasing features of the old place. Aunt Bet never seemed weary of planting and sowing, taking the word literally or metaphorically. A consideration of who was to gather the harvest did not stay her hand. When the season came for it, then she planted her trees and sowed her seed, knowing that the increase would come to brighten the lot of some fellow man or woman.

The spring was always a season that she loved, and the first spring spent in the "Thompson House" was one of great and pleasurable activity to her. When warm enough to be out-of-doors she had her rocking-chair put on the back porch, and from there directed the raw negro boys who were cleaning, sodding, and weeding the yards and garden. All of them liked to work for "Miss Betsey," and her ragged regiment had many volunteers; — there were also many deserters to report.

The children in the primary class in the school soon knew her hours for being on the back porch or in the garden, and there wended their way on various pretences and as often as possible, clustering around her and remaining until she reminded them that they might be wanted in their school-room. One dear little blue-eyed girl, often stepping to my side, would whisper a request that she might "go into the dining-room and sit with Mrs. Taylor." Wild-plants, with their native sod still around them for setting out in her borders, or wayside beauties still sparkling with beads of dew, gathered as they walked through the grassy lanes to school, were daily offerings to Aunt Bet from these youthful admirers, who felt intuitively that in her they found a sympathetic and interested friend, and with



many of them, even after the lapse of years, the thought of her is still a tender memory.

Ned, the only boy for a time in our school, was easily first in all activities, and quite led his class. In the early spring of '69, however, Mildred brought our dear George to visit us, hoping that the milder climate of Virginia would break up a long and troublesome attack of catarrh that he had suffered from during the winter. In this hope she was not disappointed. His improvement was so marked that at the expiration of her visit she was induced to leave him with us for a longer trial of the outdoor life in our semi-mountain climate. He now came into the school, and upon Ned no longer rested the sole vindication of masculine superiority.

This would not be a veracious chronicle of that time did I omit the mention of Walton the young dining-room boy or Lizzie the chambermaid. Both belonged to the "fambly," being the children of old family servants. These two young people deserve honourable mention. They were the last of their kind, exhibiting, in the freedom thrust upon them, the virtues learned by precept and example in the homes of their former masters. Walton, always trustworthy, became, under Aunt Bet's instructions, an excellent but-

ler. She taught him also something more valuable than the duties of that station. Realizing that while he was shining her silver and glass or polishing her floors many of his own age and colour were in school or in college at Harper's Ferry fitting themselves for their new status in life, she felt it but his due that he should be helped along in the same direction. So every morning Aunt Bet gave him lessons in reading, spelling, writing, and arithmetic, and you rarely came across the implements of Walton's trade without finding a slate or book lying with them. Under her he learned to write letters, make out lists, and keep accounts, doing all in a fair and legible handwriting. His progress was so rapid that he soon became a shining light in the coloured Baptist debating society. On one of Mildred's visits to us he consulted her upon a question that he was soon to debate, namely, "Which has the better right to the American continent, the original Indian tribes or the American citizens of African descent?" He preferred to support the side of his own race, wherein enthusiasm would count without facts; but he had been assigned to the other, and he felt somewhat weak in history. Mildred condensed for him chapter on chapter from Irving, Prescott, Parkman, etc., and the question was decided upon the

merits of Walton's argument. Our two laddies George and Ned were devoted to Walton, and much frequented his society. He was but a youth in his teens, yet a good prototype of the then uncreated Uncle Remus, and they considered it a great privilege to be exempted from the formality of "handed tea" in the parlour—to take it alone in the dining-room, seasoned by Walton's stories as he waited upon them. In fact, he was their oracle, and they consulted with him on all subjects, from the parting of the hair (he was intimate with the village barber) to that unwritten code determining what might or might not be done by "two little young quality-gentlemen." And no shadow of harm fell upon their pure natures from this companionship.

As for Lizzie, no plummet-line could be found long enough to sound the depths of her amiability and kindness. To see her make up a bed, puff out a pillow and then gently place it beneath an aching head, was to give a needed lesson to the graduating class at any training-school for nurses.

My Aunt's good fortune in keeping with her up to this time some of the old servants had prevented a complete realization of the countless worries and deprivations that the new system of domestic service was

fixing upon the community. She was not long destined, however, for this agreeable immunity. We had given some outbuildings to Aunt Lucinda which her husband had moved to a lot that he had bought near the village, and now he announced that, the house being ready, "he must ask Miss Betsey to give up Lucinda and Lizzie that he might take them home." This was a blow, but we were saved from its immediate descent by one much more serious then impending. When Aunt Bet told Lucinda that her "Miss Flo" was engaged and would be married in a few months, the loyal old woman said she would never desert the "famby" in a time like that; 't was bad enough for "Miss Betsey to lose the chile, let alone the cook." Yes, she whose infancy, childhood, and girlhood we had all watched over with a most solicitous love, whose happiness we had held a sacred trust, was now to leave us and enter upon a new life. Flo was to be married in the early winter, and it seemed but following the natural course of events in a household ruled by Aunt Bet that a stir of wedding preparations should fill the air. With a conservatism of which this is the last case on record, it was decided that such preparations could not be made without the presence of Matilda Robinson. A buggy was sent to Winchester for

her. She arrived with her thimble already on her finger, and establishing herself in one corner of Aunt Bet's chamber began at once to dictate the requirements of a trousseau. "Age had not withered or custom staled her infinite variety." She was as fascinating to the two laddies as she had been to their mothers before them. She held them by stories of the glories of Aspen Hill, the charm of the life there, the perfections of their forebears, etc. A fervid imagination and a warm-hearted loyalty are wonderful mediums for word-painters, and Matilda's "fambly" portraits were easily recognizable by those who had loved the originals; but to such as knew them not they were pale pastels of King Arthur and the bravest and truest of his knights.

Flo was married in December, 1869, to Mr. John Boyle Tilford, Jr., a gentleman of Kentucky parentage, but then living in New York city. Her wedding was but a small gathering of family relatives and most intimate friends, and, following the newer custom beginning to prevail, the young couple left us immediately after the breakfast for a wedding-journey and a visit to Mr. Tilford's old home in Lexington, Kentucky. We all missed the young people, but no one so much as Aunt Bet did. To her the parting with Flo was like

parting with an own daughter, as well as a constant daily companion; for while all the rest of us were in school Flo was with "Mamma," and their interests were generally the same. The two little boys all unconsciously rushed into the breach, and by counting on "Grandmama's" interest and sympathy in all their doings gradually won her away from her loneliness to the serene cheerfulness that was so large a part of her charm.

Mrs. Lupton, a favourite niece, had for a year or two past lived on the adjoining place to ours. Aunt Bet, always enjoying her society, now began to look forward to the daily visit this niece considerately paid her as one of her special pleasures. Still, with all we could do, she missed her morning hours with Flo.

She was not well this winter, suffering much from long periods of neuralgic attacks, and the lameness caused by the breaking of a tendon in her left ankle many years before began now to increase visibly, making any but a short walk a serious undertaking,—not so much from positive pain, but from—as she always described it—a sudden giving way of the ankle and the dread of a fall. Taking it altogether, this winter was not one of the brightest to her. Flo and the springtime, however, came back to us together, sing-

ing birds and the perfume of sweet blossoms filled the air, and Aunt Bet could once more enjoy her porch and garden life. Her summers were always brightened by visits from Mildred and Mr. Sullivan, besides the more casual visits of other friends, and by short visits she made to Springsberry, Hampton, and Clere-monte. This summer was no exception to the usual rule.

On the reopening of school the middle of September our family was the same in numbers as the last year, but I soon saw that the care of it, with a new corps of servants, was more than our Aunt could comfortably carry. The furrows made by the passage of threescore and ten years were beginning to show themselves, and in their wake lay a lessened alacrity to take up new cares and an unwonted willingness to lay aside former ones. The domestic problem was becoming day by day more difficult to solve, and it was hard for her to fall into the new ways. She knew not how to be simply an employer and no longer an interested and responsible caretaker and friend. The want of proper ambition in and training for the younger coloured people filled her with pity; and yet she was not able to help them, for they would not be helped her way.

We began to see that some way must be devised of relieving our dear Aunt of the care of the house, for a time, at least, until she should grow stronger. Our ways are not often God's ways. The decision that we were pondering over was taken out of our hands, and in a manner we had not taken into account. In March I became quite ill, and was forced to give up teaching and take a complete rest. Just at this juncture we had an excellent opportunity to rent our house, furniture, etc., and also of turning over the school to a friend who was looking for just such an opening. It was decided to accept these two offers for six months, and we expected certainly to return to our home and school in the autumn. Again our plans were overruled. A combination of circumstances made it desirable not to return then, and in the end we never went back. Aunt Bet boarded during that spring with her niece Mrs. Lupton, having a large chamber on the first floor, easy of access to her friends, and here many were wont to collect daily. Ned, of course, was still with her. July and August she spent in New York with Mildred, going out to the Mountain House at Orange, New Jersey, several times to be with Flo and to enjoy with her the beautiful baby "Willy Hammond."



It was not until Aunt Bet's return from this visit to the North that an idea of a change in our way of living took form and shape. The most important facts that influenced were, first, that the two laddies could no longer be with us. Naturally George, now much stronger, must be at home. His guardian wisely preferred for dear Ned at this time country life and a country school over those of a village. In this last decision the strongest reason for our remaining in Berryville was lost, and Aunt Bet felt that not having a house to keep up would give her greater freedom in disposing of both her time and her means. The latter was of great importance to her, wishing as she did to be able to minister as much as lay in her possibilities to the growing needs, educational and otherwise, of Taylor, Alice, and Ned. Lastly, my medical adviser urged a little longer resting spell for me. Accepting Mr. Sullivan's and Mildred's invitation and arrangements for us, Aunt Bet and I were to come on to New York in November, 1872; but owing to an offer made me by the head of a large school in that city, I came earlier, about the last of October, and Aunt Bet, in order that she might make Ned comfortable for the winter, delayed leaving until the last of December.

Her first visit was to Flo at Brick Church Station, Orange, New Jersey, to see the two dear baby boys, Willy and Frank, Frank being then about six weeks old. She enjoyed this visit extremely, receiving great consideration from every one, and once more a nursery became her realm.

Flo had called to her aid as nurse to Frank our dear nurse "Mammy," now quite an old woman, full of tender reminiscences, and with sweet affectionate interests in her nursling's babies. Aunt Bet never tired of Mammy's nursery talks, and her presence, that made the link with the past a very close one, helped to bridge the many gaps made by time and brighten the many changes in circumstances.

Changes came, too, to this fireside so "well defended." Dear Flo and her husband were called to resign to his Heavenly Father's keeping their eldest child, "Willy Hammond," the brightest and most engaging child, before he had completed his sixth year. A year before this great loss a baby girl had been sent them, to whom was given the name of "Elizabeth Taylor," in loving honour of the great-aunt who had made the name dear to many.

In March Aunt Bet came to stay with Mr. Sullivan and Mildred, or, as she always affectionately expressed

it, to "my city home," remaining until the first of July, when I took her back to Virginia in time for Ned's vacation, when he could spend much of his time with her. This summer was a reproduction of the last. Comfortably settled in the same large and cool chamber at her niece's, Mrs. Lupton's, with the "three children" near enough to be with her almost daily, troops of friends to welcome her back among them, and short visits to the country whenever she felt equal to driving and visiting, made up to her mind a desirable way of spending the summer months, and no other plan that we suggested, including a little novelty or variety, at all appealed to her preference. The only variety was that one summer, in the absence of Mrs. Lupton from the village, she passed two very happy months in our own house, then rented to Dr. James McGuire, whose wife was the Betty McGuire of whom we have spoken in an earlier chapter of this little sketch.

This threefold division of her time continued for five years, when she came to Mr. Sullivan's to reside permanently, never leaving the house excepting on rare occasions for a drive until the arrival of the day for the annual flitting to Virginia. In this home she passed the last six years of her life in the midst of

those to whom she was most dear and who considered her presence a blessing on their home.

Two years of this period Ned was in the North; a part of the time he spent at a commercial college at Poughkeepsie, and afterwards he was in business in the city of New York. And now, just as when a lad, many of his evenings and always his Sundays were passed with his "Grandmama," with his chair drawn up to her lounge before the window, or, if winter, both seated before the glowing grate-fire, she knitting his socks, and both busy with cheerful talk—she talking much and always most hopefully of his future, for this was a topic of the greatest interest to her. I used to notice about this time how naturally the relation between these two, so many years apart, was changing. She was unconsciously resigning the leadership and leaning on Ned's judgment in regard to certain outside things. She always liked to accept a man's view of public questions, or men, or business situations. Ned was a man now, and instinctively she treated him as such. I never saw our dear Aunt happier than in these ripe years of her age. She loved the atmosphere that pervaded the home, she enjoyed the intellectual activities of her host, and she was at her very best when, seated with her as was his daily

custom for a brief talk either before or after dinner, suppressing every sign of fatigue he brought from his stores of the day's experience wise and witty conversation, that from her quiet "ingle-nook" she might know how the world went on in one of its great centres. His Sunday talks, usually immediately upon his return from church, were her great delight. Seated by her side he would read one of her favourite books, or read to her from one of his own, the latter occasionally his Latin Bible, and though understanding no word of this she had a pleasure in it, saying that it reminded her of cathedral music.

Her chamber became more and more the favourite gathering place of the family and their most intimate friends and visitors, for she now rarely left it except to walk for exercise through the rooms and hallway of that same floor. Stairs were hard for her to climb, and her descent to the library or parlour was an event to be chronicled, the only occasions being a birthday or some other important anniversary. Her last birthday, the eighty-second, was passed in her own room, her friends assembling there with congratulations and gifts of flowers. Among others came our dear friend, Miss Mary Magill, who recited to the enjoyment of all present many dialect pieces, recalling the peculiar

qualities and humour of the race always most interesting to Aunt Bet,—our native Southern negroes.

Our Aunt was one who promptly and deeply impressed herself upon her surroundings, and her living-room completely reflected the orderly habits and tastes of a lifetime. Her room was lighted by three large windows. One was in the alcove where her bed stood, and through this she loved to watch the waxing and waning of the moon over the church-tower and the growing lights of the dawning day. In the middle one hung her singing-bird "Dick," made so gentle by her care that he often perched upon her shoulder, or, poising his restless little body on the rim of her work-basket, pecked at its contents with the same curiosity as to their uses and history as her infantile visitors showed. From the fireplace to the third window her lounge extended, the head of it being within the embrasure of the window, and drawn close to its side was her own especial double-decker table, the contents of whose shelves rarely varied. On one end lay her books for daily reading, all in large print. They were the Testament and Psalms, the Prayer-Book and Hymns, Jay's "Morning and Evening Exercises," Bickersteth on the Lord's Supper, "Festivals and Fasts of the Church," and "Family Prayers" by Bishop

Meade. On the lower shelf of the table were her little work-basket, her knitting-bag, writing-desk, and a copy of Johnson's or Walker's Dictionary. Two miniatures and a few photographs stood on her mantel-piece, but she cared little for likenesses unless they were very good. Those she kept by her she really loved to look at, and two or three of children she kept between the leaves of her Testament, turning often to study the sweet baby faces.

She breakfasted in her own room; this over, and her very careful and neat toilet made, she then settled herself in the corner of her lounge where the light would fall full upon the page for her daily reading, and the air of absorbed attention indicated to us that it was also an hour of worship. She never read works of dogma or doctrinal discussions; such had no attraction for her strong but simple Christian faith. One reason, to my mind, of her great enjoyment of the Psalms of David and of the hymns of all churches and all ages was that they so strongly embody faith and trust and hope, and voice in their greatest height and lowest depths the inward experience of our humanity. She found in them prayers of the deepest penitence, examples of the most unfailing submission to God's will, strong incentives to all right endeavours,

and a soaring, all-embracing faith in God and Christ. The natural fruit of such a religious state is charity towards the whole world, and this our dear Aunt had.

Finding both the climate and indoor life of the city unsuited to him, Ned determined to go back to Virginia and live there a farming life. From this time he was the magnet that drew our dear Aunt thither. As the years went by her disinclination to move about increased; each summer the journey became more fatiguing, the length of the stay shorter. She disliked travelling at night, therefore we always took two days for what is now a trip of but eight hours, stopping for the night either in Baltimore or Hagerstown, and after a late breakfast the next morning resuming our journey. The night's rest would have greatly refreshed Aunt Bet, and we would scarcely be seated in the train before she would begin to look out for the first sight of the beloved blue mountains. The familiar scenes whirling one by one into view were greeted as old friends; every turn or curve in the road was known to her. All of this so excited her interest that by the time Charles' Town was reached she was as gleeful as a child on its first trip from home. All the conductors and porters welcomed her, and when we slowed up at the Berryville station Ned



stood by the step to lift her down in his strong arms, then to drive her to Cleremonte, this point having been her destination for the last three annual visits she made to Virginia. Once there, all things conspired to her quiet contentment. She loved the dear mistress, her niece, Mrs. Edward McCormick. She enjoyed the young life around her made by the happy group of great-nephews and nieces. The old homestead of itself was dear to her from many tender associations with her young sister Florinda. Now, seated alone of her generation on the vine-draped porch where they had so often sat side by side in the old days, she never tired of the companionship of the "everlasting hills." There they stood, bounding the fair picture of rich meadow and woodland stretched out before her, as they had stood from her earliest childhood; and now they seemed unchanging friends in her age.

The last year of her life she spent the months of August and September with Cousin Nelly at Cleremonte, and here at this time Ned confided to her the glad secret of his engagement to be married. Always an ardent partisan of early marriage, this news gave her the great satisfaction of feeling that her dear boy's future happiness was now secured. I thought

she would probably wish to remain in Virginia to be present at the wedding, but she wrote for me to come for her in time to make the journey to New York before the time of the usual equinoctial storm. I went at once for her, and to my concern found her looking older. She had been suffering from a cold which had brought on severe neuralgic pains. She wanted to get, as she expressed it, "home and into winter quarters." Ned made all arrangements for our comfortable starting, and we made the journey as usual in two days. Mildred met us at Jersey City with a rolling-chair, the first we had seen; that, the crossing in the boat, the drive up the crowded streets, were all interesting incidents to our dear Aunt and ever had a charm of novelty to her, and she seemed bright and strong when we reached home. The sweetness of her chamber, cheerful with firelight and blooming flowers, struck her anew; her arm-chair drawn to its accustomed corner by the fender, "Mary's" thoughtfulness in setting out her table with her best-loved books just at the right angle to catch the sunlight,—all these evidences of love were gratefully acknowledged. But her greatest pleasure was in the arrival of the two gentlemen from down-town, their warm, tender greeting, their "Welcome Home."

The next day brought Flo, John, and the two children, Frank and Bessie, in time to add their welcome, and then the daily life of our dear Aunt flowed on in its accustomed channel as if there had been no interruption of journey or visit elsewhere.

The time being over and past of her journeyings, those who loved Aunt Bet most willingly came to her. Ned,—Edward M. Stribling,—was married to Lydia Kownslar, daughter of Mrs. Elizabeth Blackburn Kownslar, of Berryville, Clarke County, Virginia, on the 11th of January, 1883. Two days later he brought his bride to pay us a visit, that we, especially his dear Grandmama, might learn to know and love her. Few earthly happenings could have given the gratification that this visit did to the dear, affectionate woman who had watched over the infancy and guided the boyhood of this most estimable young man.

As the autumn passed into winter, we who daily watched over her could see that our dear Aunt's constitutional strength was failing. The hour of daily rising became gradually later, the hours of resting on her lounge more frequent and longer; the small and beautiful hands, as they plied the knitting-needles, were whiter and moved with an unwonted languor,

and the marker was often placed in the Book before the accustomed portion was read to the end.

This was especially noticeable after the new year '83 had set in. Her good and most attentive doctor now told us that, without a positive and local ailment, but from general impairment of the whole vital force, our dear Aunt was gently but surely "wearing awa'." This was hard for us to realize in its full extent, as her interest continued in everything that was taking place around her either of public or private moment. All events of pleasant character impressed her deeply; disturbing thoughts and things passed over without leaving a trace upon her serene spirit. Though she mentioned it very rarely, I believe the thought that her earthly span of life was almost spent was much with her all these winter days. The strains of the "Nunc dimittis" were sounding in her soul, and the tenderness of farewell was in her every word and act.

The first week of February found her more than usually feeble from an attack of intestinal indigestion, and she was confined for three or four days to her bed by it. Still her interest was unabated in all that went on. I recall her great enjoyment when Mr. Sullivan one of these evenings sat upon the side of her bed to

tell her of a birthday dinner given to Mr. Peter Cooper that he had just attended at Mr. Hewitt's. She made him give her all the details that he could remember,—asking how Mr. Cooper was bearing his many years, what he said, etc., showing the most vivid interest in it all, and evidently gratified that this dear host had been one of those bidden to do honour to the aged philanthropist.

Our dear Aunt Bet rallied from this attack, dressed as usual in her gown of soft flannel, and lay on her lounge or sat in her easy-chair by the fire; resumed her reading, and even one day drew from her work-basket a piece of work she was doing for little Bessie's doll-house. Soon tiring under any strain upon her attention, she would lie back among the pillows of her lounge and fall into a quiet sleep.

On the morning of the 9th of February, when beginning to take her breakfast, we noticed suddenly a tremulousness in her hands, an unconsciousness in her gaze. The faithful Mary Dwyer and I laid her quietly back in her bed, and she never left it again. Doctor Stuart had not been mistaken; the heart had grown very feeble, and the life went gradually and almost painlessly out. She slept much; when half awake

talked much of the days of her youth, calling her sisters by name, but when quite awake would rouse to consciousness, was quiet, and most loving to all around her. Her last conscious word was to Mildred, who, seated at her side, was holding her hand. With a grasp whose strength surprised her, she pressed Mildred's hand and repeated several times, "Good child—good child." After that she had restless slumber for an hour or two, and then, just before the dawn of the 15th of February, she passed to her eternal home and awoke to the higher life awaiting her there. And we who knelt around her bed knew that it was "well" with her, "having brought her steadfast life to a good ending,—the steadfast life that faithfully serves its generation, and the good ending which leaves behind a light to shine before men, to the everlasting glory of God."

When we looked for the last time on the loved face of our dear Aunt, it was hard to believe that her spirit had fled, so instinct were its lineaments with strength, tenderness, and gentle patience, the qualities that had made her life a benefaction to many in her day and time. Mildred and George took the body to Winchester, where they were joined by Ned and many others,

sorrowing that they should see her no more, and where, followed to the grave by relatives and old friends, she was laid to rest in the spot reserved so long ago by the side of her husband.

And so our dear Aunt Bet rested from her labours. Of great and brilliant deeds according to the world's standard she did none; but the simple retracing of her long life brings us into such an atmosphere of loving service that those who shared and witnessed it can never afford to let its memory fade and die.













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